

BEYOND TODAY



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Can We Believe God's Promises?



Scott Ashley
Managing editor

Abraham is one of the most fascinating figures in the Bible. He's called "the father of the faithful" (see Romans 4:11) because he left his comfortable city life to travel the wilderness with his flocks and herds without a permanent home.

Probably the most remarkable part of Abraham's story is recorded in Genesis 12:1-3, where God gives him a series of astounding promises: "Now the LORD had said to Abram: 'Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you. *I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed*'" (emphasis added throughout).

As Abraham proved his faithful obedience, God expanded those promises. In Genesis 17:16, God assured him regarding his then-childless 90-year-old wife Sarah, "*She shall be a mother of nations; kings of peoples shall be from her.*"

In Genesis 22:17-18 God further promised Abraham: "*I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.*"

So we see that God's promises to Abraham included, among other things:

- "All the nations of the earth" would be blessed through him.
- God would make a great nation of his descendants.
- "Nations" and "kings of peoples" would come from him through his wife Sarah.
- His descendants would number "as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore."

What staggering promises! And more specific promises and prophecies were given to Abraham's son Isaac, his grandson Jacob (renamed Israel) and his great-grandson Joseph.

But, as Hebrews 11:13 tells us of Abraham and other faithful men and women of God, "These all died in faith, *not having received the promises . . .*" Which brings us to the title above: "*Can We Believe God's Promises?*"

The short answer is *absolutely yes!* But we need to understand that God operates on a completely different

plane from ours as human beings (Isaiah 55:8-9). For Him, "one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day" (2 Peter 3:8). This "High and Lofty One who inhabits eternity" is not bound by time as we are (Isaiah 57:15). Human possessions and territorial claims are infinitesimal next to a God who says, "*All the earth is Mine*" (Exodus 19:5) and "*Everything under heaven is Mine*" (Job 41:11).



God *does* keep His promises, but in ways and over time frames that our finite minds have difficulty comprehending. This brings us to the theme of this issue, which is the history and biblical importance of the British royal throne and empire—and the major English-speaking nations that emerged from that empire, notably the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

Less than a century ago the British Empire was the world's preeminent power. It was truthfully said that it was the empire on which the sun never set—meaning the empire spanned the globe from Europe to Africa to North and South America to Asia to Australia and to many islands in between. For two centuries it was the dominant global power, with a navy that ruled the seas.

But how did a small island nation roughly the size of the U.S. state of Michigan (or Wyoming or Oregon) grow into a world superpower? It seems impossible, but Britain and its colonies dominated the globe for two centuries and ushered in the modern world!

With Britain's slide from preeminence in the aftermath of World War II, one of its former colonies—the United States—became the new world superpower, a position it has now held for three quarters of a century.

Is there any link between the rise and world dominance of these two powers with the astounding promises made to Abraham almost 4,000 years ago? Those promises were not fulfilled in Abraham's time, or in the time of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah that were descended from him. *But they have been fulfilled*—and in ways that are truly amazing and bear testimony to God's faithfulness and the amazing accuracy of Bible prophecy.

We hope you'll carefully read this issue—and that you'll be astounded at how we can indeed believe all of God's promises! **BT**



The Biblical Identity of Britain's Royal Family

Part 1



The origins of Britain's monarchy are far more ancient than most realize. For surprising as it may seem, it is directly linked to promises God made in the Bible regarding the dynasty of Israel's King David, which was to persist until our day and beyond.

by Tom Robinson

The recent funeral of Queen Elizabeth II, the longest-reigning British monarch, was a major world event watched by many millions around the globe. Her passing marks the end of an era, but the age of kings and queens still persists—transitioning now into the reign of her son, King Charles III, scheduled to be crowned later this year in May. The scale of interest in and fascination with the British royal family—its grand occasions along with daily routines and scandals—dwarfs that of any other monarchy on the planet. No other comes close.

Why does the British monarchy have such a high profile? At one time this monarchy reigned over a large portion of the world—and that's significant. Yet it's part of a bigger story—one that, unknown to most, remarkably finds its beginnings in

the pages of the Bible. According to promises God laid out, an enduring dynasty would be part of the heritage of ancient Israel. Eventually, the dynastic succession would culminate in the Messiah or Christ, a great King of the line of Israel's King David who would reign on the throne of Israel forever and establish His rule over all nations.

That Messiah, Jesus Christ, came as a descendant of David, but He did not yet occupy the Davidic throne as He was foretold to. In announcing to Mary that she would give birth to the promised Messiah, the angel Gabriel told her: "And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob [or Israel] forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end"

(Luke 1:31-33; compare Isaiah 9:6-7).

This points to the future Kingdom of God over all nations, as proclaimed in many prophecies—central to the gospel or good news Jesus preached. But we might wonder how this would continue the Israelite dynasty of David, especially since David's dynasty ceased to reign in the Holy Land when the Babylonians invaded and destroyed Jerusalem around 587 B.C. Was Jesus to inherit a throne that no longer existed—having seemingly been wiped out more than five centuries before His first coming?

As we'll further see, God made an unbreakable promise to David of an unbreakable dynasty, declaring that his throne would be built up to all generations until the Messiah's reign, which is yet future. Jesus must return *to a great monarchy that still exists in the end time.*

We begin here in part 1 of a two-

part series in this issue of *Beyond Today* with God's establishment of a perpetual Israelite dynasty through King David and His descendants—along with the quandary of that dynasty seemingly ceasing for hundreds of years. (In part 2, beginning on page 9, we'll discover the direct connection to the British monarchy.)

The scepter promise: with Judah until the Messiah

We start with the first mentions of a line of kings in Scripture, as revealed in the book of Genesis to the patriarch Abraham and his early descendants, particularly Judah, long before these kings lived.

son Isaac and his son Jacob. But the promises of national greatness and of kings is in succeeding passages narrowed down to this primary lineage. In the same chapter we see these were to come through a son from Abraham's wife Sarah, referring to Isaac: ". . . then I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of peoples shall be from her" (verse 16).

The promises are later specified to come through Isaac's son Jacob. As God told him in Genesis 35:11, "Be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall proceed from you, and kings shall come from your body." God gave Jacob the new name *Israel*—his 12 sons being the

coming Messiah. So the ruling dynasty was to be of the tribe of Judah until the Messiah comes to reign.

Further regarding Judah, we should take note of the strange incident with the birth of his twin sons Pharez and Zarah (or Perez and Zerah). Zarah's hand came out first, and a scarlet thread was tied to it to mark the first-born. But then his hand went back in and the other twin was actually born first, gaining the name Pharez, meaning "breach" or "breaking through" (see Genesis 38:27-30).

This seems a very odd incident to record if it were to have no further significance, especially with Judah's descendants receiving the royal

lineage—birth order being a factor in that. Interestingly, we later see very little in Scripture about the descendants of Zarah, with most of the Jews of the land,

including the royal family of David, being the descendants of Pharez. The strange incident here may well have led to clan rivalry. We'll return to this matter later.

The Davidic covenant: a perpetual dynasty

The descendants of Israel grew into a sizable nation while enslaved in Egypt, and on leaving there under Moses they entered into a covenant with God, acknowledging Him as their Ruler. God was in fact Israel's first king, prior to the people later calling for a human king at the time of Samuel (see 1 Samuel 12:12; 8:7).

In fact, the Lord who interacted on behalf of God the Father with the people at that time, the spiritual Rock who dwelt in presence among them as their God and Ruler, was the divine Word who became Jesus Christ (John 1:1-3, 14; 8:58; 1 Corinthians 10:4). The throne of the nation belonged to Him, and even more so since He was the Father of mankind and of Israel and its line of kings as the Creator.

God ruled then through chosen judges, priests, prophets, elders and

God made an unbreakable promise to King David of an unbreakable dynasty, declaring that his throne would continue until the Messiah's reign.



God promised that Abraham's descendants would become greatly blessed nations through which the world would be blessed—in part through this line of kings. God told him, "I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you" (Genesis 17:6).

Some think this refers to various Arab peoples descended from Abraham besides the lineage through his

fathers of the 12 tribes of Israel.

We later learn that the birthright blessings of national greatness passed to Jacob's son Joseph—specifically to Joseph's two sons Ephraim and Manasseh. In prophesying of the last days, Jacob said that Ephraim would become the great *company* of nations while Manasseh would become a great *single* nation (see Genesis 48; 49:1, 22-26).

But we're further informed that while the birthright of national greatness would go to Joseph's descendants, the *line of kings* was given to another tribe, the descendants of Jacob's son Judah (see 1 Chronicles 5:1-2).

We find this also in Jacob's prophecy of the last days, wherein he said, "The scepter [or rod of kingly rule] shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh comes; and to Him shall be the obedience of the people" (Genesis 49:10).

"Shiloh" is variously translated as "Peaceable [One]," "Sent [One]" or "[One] Issued Forth" (as offspring). Designating the one to whom the scepter of rule truly belongs, it is commonly understood as a reference to the



personal intervention to direct communities and individuals. Yet the people rejected God's system of rule, which had given them a lot of freedom, in favor of a more authoritarian state. Of course, God had foretold a line of kings, but the people's motivation in this was to be like the other nations around them, with a human champion to protect and rule them. God did authorize a human king—but one who was subject to His laws, including special regulations for kings (Deuteronomy 17:14-20).

It was later explained that Israelite kings "sat on the throne of the LORD" (1 Chronicles 29:23; 2 Chronicles 9:6-8)—reigning as kings *for* Him in a coregency, the throne still belonging to God.

We have examples humanly of a king appointing his son to the throne to take over the duties of kingship while the father was still alive—as David did with Solomon—so that there were two kings at the same time, one ruling for the other. (And we see this ultimately in what the Father in heaven has done, granting Christ His Son to sit with Him on His throne so that they are both King.) Likewise, Israel's kings were in a special relationship with God, reigning for Him.

The first human king over the nation, beyond some local attempts in the Judges period, was Saul, who was of the tribe of Benjamin, not of Judah. But then, after Saul persisted in rebelling against God's directives and was rejected from being king, God chose David, of the tribe of Judah, to reign.

Yet what if Saul had remained faithful? The throne would still have had to pass to Judah somehow, according to the scepter promise—and God could have easily worked that out, probably through intermarriage preserving both lineages.

In 2 Samuel 7:11-16, God promises David that He would have an enduring "house" or royal dynasty through his descendants starting with Solomon, with the throne of the kingdom

established forever. "I will be his Father, and he shall be My son," God says of the Davidic kings (verse 14), speaking of the special relationship He intended to have with these rulers, who were to be as sons reigning as coregents for Him (along with ultimately fulfillment in the future Messiah as the Son of God).

God further states that if David's successor committed iniquity, God

"Your seed I will establish forever, and build up your throne to all generations."

would bring judgment while continuing to show mercy, not cutting off the dynasty as happened with Saul. Yet other verses show that the promise of continuing succession from each particular king was conditional (such as 2 Chronicles 7:17-19)—whereas the overall promise of David's dynasty continuing was *unconditional*. Per God's promises, Solomon was not removed from office when he turned to evil—but He lost the guarantee of succession through His own descendants, so that succession could pass to other Davidic family members.

God did continue the dynasty of David through Solomon's descendants, but He has not obligated Himself to perpetuate Solomon's line—whereas He *has* promised an enduring house of David. The ultimate King to come in the line of David, Jesus Christ, was biologically descended *not* from Solomon but from another son of David, Nathan. Yet Jesus has inherited from the Solomonic line legally through adoption by Mary's husband Joseph (see Matthew 1:1-17; Luke 3:23-38).

Following the death of Solomon in the 900s B.C., God brought severe judgment on his unfaithfulness and that of the nation by dividing the nation and minimizing the scope of the Jewish monarchy's rule for centuries to come. The northern tribes of Israel rebelled against the rule of Solomon's son Rehoboam and accepted the rule of Jeroboam, a

former official of Solomon to whom God gave rule over most of the nation (1 Kings 11-12).

There were now *two* Israelite kingdoms—the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah. The northern kingdom, the house of Israel, was ruled by a series of non-Davidic dynasties and coups, with none of its kings listed in Scripture as righteous. Eventually

the Assyrian Empire conquered the nation in the 700s B.C. and took away its people in successive invasions and deportations.

The southern kingdom of Judah continued under the rule of the Davidic dynasty in Jerusalem with mostly wicked kings, and a few righteous ones, until that nation was similarly crushed by Babylonian invasions in the 500s B.C., with the people taken away captive and the last king of Judah dethroned and his sons killed before him.

But how could this happen, considering what God had promised regarding David's dynasty?

Psalms 89 recounts even more about the important promises made to David, giving us additional details. Yet it does so amid the monarchy suffering ruin, with the writer wondering how God could allow this and asking how long He would let things continue this way.

Verses 3-4 show God declaring, "I have made a covenant with My chosen, I have sworn to My servant David: 'Your seed I will establish forever, and build up your throne to all generations.'" (We will come back to this aspect shortly.)

God further decrees the powerful future of this monarchy: "Also I will set his hand over the sea, and his right hand over the rivers . . . Also I will make him My firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth" (verses 25-27).

This dominance over the sea and

being the highest of the kings of the earth would apply even before the reign of the Messiah, as it fits here with the time of the kings still violating God's laws and being judged for this (see verses 31-33).

Yet it's reiterated that even disobedience by these succeeding rulers would not bring the end of the monarchy. God states: "His seed also I will make to endure forever, and his

You have exalted the right hand of his adversaries; You have made all his enemies rejoice. You have also turned back the edge of his sword, and have not sustained him in the battle. You have made his glory cease, and cast his throne down to the ground. The days of his youth You have shortened; You have covered him with shame."

Did God break His promises after all? *Never*. We need to understand

cannot be numbered, nor the sand of the sea measured, so will I multiply the descendants of David My servant and the Levites who minister to Me" (verses 17-22).

God then further states: "If My covenant is not with day and night, and if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth, then I will cast away the descendants of Jacob and David My servant, so that I will not take any of his descendants to be rulers [plural] over the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. For I will cause their captives to return, and will have mercy on them" (verses 25-26).

To make sense of this, we need to carefully consider what God swore to David in Psalm 89:3-4: "Your seed I will establish forever, and build up your throne *to all generations*" (emphasis added). This tells us that the throne of David would exist in all generations, a generation being all the people alive at a given time. This actually allows for interregnums or gaps in the reign of the Davidic dynasty—as long as the dynasty was restored within a generation.

There was such a gap in the Davidic throne when Queen Athaliah of the northern house of Ahab took over the rule of Judah for six years while the rightful heir, a young boy named Joash or Jehoash, was kept hidden (2 Kings 11:12; 2 Chronicles 22-23). But the boy was at last made king, it having been stated, "Behold, the king's son shall reign, as the LORD has said of the sons of David" (verse 3).

Reflecting on what God promised in Jeremiah 33, it is interesting to consider that part of the nation of Judah and the Levitical priesthood were restored within 70 years of the fall of Jerusalem—that is, within the same generation. But what about the throne of David? We see some heirs to the dynasty's lineage brought back—from whom Jesus Christ descended. But the Davidic monarchy ceased in Judah.

Many maintain that the Davidic dynasty ended with the fall of Jeru-



Four generations of Britain's royal family watch a military flyover at Buckingham Palace.

throne as the days of heaven . . . My covenant I will not break, nor alter the word that has gone out of My lips. Once I have sworn by My holiness; I will not lie to David: His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before Me; it shall be established forever like the moon, even like the faithful witness in the sky" (verses 29, 34-37).

God's promises regarding the Davidic dynasty are declared unbreakable. But then came the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the monarchy in Judah.

Verses 38-45 lament to God: "But You have cast off and abhorred, You have been furious with Your anointed. You have renounced the covenant of Your servant; You have profaned his crown by casting it to the ground. You have broken down all his hedges; You have brought his strongholds to ruin.

"All who pass by the way plunder him; he is a reproach to his neighbors.

that some key elements in these promises make it clear that God would not leave the Davidic dynasty in this toppled state for long—that the dynasty would be restored to continue before the generation that witnessed its collapse passed away.

The throne built up to all generations

In Jeremiah 33 we find the promises of an unbreakable dynasty reaffirmed along with continuity in the Levitical priesthood: "For thus says the LORD: 'David shall never lack a man [a person] to sit on the throne of the house of Israel [significant wording we'll come back to later] . . .

"If you can break My covenant with the day and My covenant with the night, so that there will not be day and night in their season, then My covenant may also be broken with David My servant, so that he shall not have a son [or descendant] to reign on his throne . . . As the host of heaven

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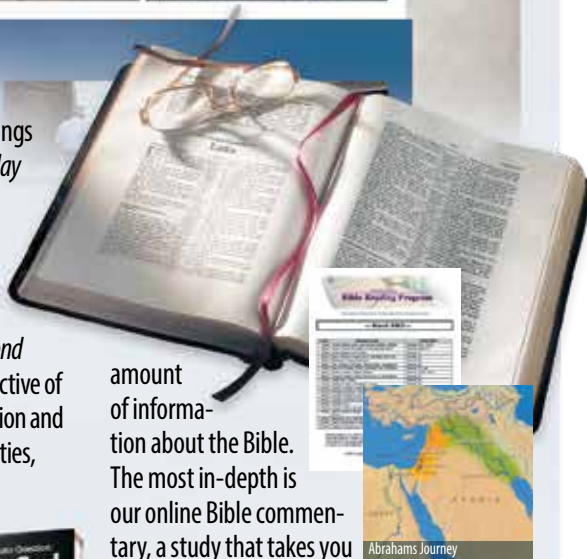
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salem to the Babylonians and that Jesus inherited a restored Jewish throne at His first coming, assuming rule upon it at His resurrection. But this would mean there was a gap in the reign of David's dynasty of *more than 500 years*. How does that fit with the throne being established and built up in *all generations* from David's time?

Moreover, Jesus did not assume rule on the earthly throne of David at His first coming or when He ascended to the Father's throne in heaven after His resurrection. Jesus compared Himself in a parable to a nobleman who "went in to a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return" (Luke 19:12). So Jesus will not assume direct rule on David's throne *until His future return*, thus seemingly leaving a gap in the Davidic monarchy of *more than 2,500 years*. Such a gap of many, many generations is inconsistent with the throne persisting in *all generations*.

We should also take note of the fact that Jeremiah 33:26 shows a succession of Davidic rulers (plural) to come after the time of Jeremiah, who lived at the end of the monarchy in Judah. This was not fulfilled only in the ultimate Messiah to come. Rather, it pointed to *other* Davidic rulers beyond the ancient fall of Judah to precede the future Messianic reign.

Consider also the scepter promise in Genesis 49 of the kingship remaining with the tribe of Judah in the last days until the Messiah comes to assume rule. Clearly a Jewish monarchy must exist in the last days for the Messiah to take it over—and it must be one that has persisted with rulers of the royal house of David.

So what happened to the Davidic dynasty? And what does that have to do with the British monarchy? Be sure to read part 2, beginning on the next page, to see how God has fulfilled His unbreakable promises. **BT**

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The Biblical Identity of Britain's Royal Family

Part 2

As we saw in part 1, God promised to Israel's King David an enduring dynasty that would still exist in our time. Putting together biblical prophecies and history, we can see what happened to that dynasty—discovering the remarkable connection to the throne of Great Britain and its amazing future.

by Tom Robinson

With the coronation of King Charles III this coming spring, the world will again be focused on the British monarchy—shortly after the widespread attention that accompanied the death of his mother, Queen Elizabeth II. What is behind the past and continuing prominence of the royal family of the United Kingdom? It will surprise many to learn that the answer lies in the pages of the Holy Bible—in its promises and prophecies concerning the Israelite dynasty of King David.

Part 1 of this two-part article series in this issue of *Beyond Today* laid the groundwork, presenting how the throne of David was foretold to endure. (It's recommended that you read that article, beginning on page 4, before proceeding to this one.) God, we saw there, made an unbreakable promise to David of an unbreakable dynasty, stating that his throne would continue through all generations until the coming reign of the Messiah, Jesus Christ. He must return to a great monarchy that still exists. And God has ensured that it will.

In fact, God specifically foretold what would happen—that the throne would be transplanted elsewhere in a series of overturns. What followed is a remarkable story,



with elements found in Scripture and history and to some degree in legend (though our focus is mainly on what's stated in the Bible). Here we find the connection to the British monarchy.

Having seen in part 1 how the throne of David was foretold to last, we now explore in part 2 how that throne was transferred, where it is now and where it will ultimately be forever.

Jeremiah's commission and the king's daughters

We pick up where we left off, with the fall of Jerusalem to Babylon in the 6th century B.C. How did the monarchy continue beyond the fall of the kingdom of Judah at that time—as it must have, given all God had promised?

The prophet Jeremiah lived at that time, and

The prophet Jeremiah was given a mysterious commission to uproot and replant elsewhere.

we've already seen his prophecy of David's throne enduring just as certainly as the cycle of day and night—with a plurality of rulers of David's line to come and not just the ultimate Messiah (Jeremiah 33:17-26).

Jeremiah's ministry began with an important yet mysterious commission, God telling him, "See, today I appoint you over nations and over kingdoms, to pluck up and to pull down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant" (Jeremiah 1:10).

We gain a partial sense of what this means through the fact that Jeremiah was in the land of Judah, preaching to the nation and its leaders through the destruction and



deportations that came. He told the people to submit to the Babylonian conquest and go with them to be planted in a new land. This was an uprooting of the nation—and of the monarchy.

Jeremiah's work began at the time of Josiah, a righteous king. Josiah died and was briefly succeeded by his son Jehoahaz, who was soon deposed by the Egyptians and taken to Egypt, where he died. The Egyptians appointed another son of Josiah to replace him—renaming him Jehoia-kim. This wicked ruler was killed by the Babylonians and briefly replaced by his son Jehoiachin or Jeconiah.

The Babylonian ruler Nebuchadnezzar deposed Jeconiah shortly afterward and had him taken captive to Babylon. His uncle, another son of Josiah renamed Zedekiah, succeeded him. Zedekiah, who also turned out to be an evil ruler, was later captured while trying to flee from Babylonian invasion, and his sons were killed in front of him before he was blinded and hauled away to Babylon where he died. This was the end of the Jewish monarchy in Judah.

Some pinned hopes on dynastic succession through Jeconiah (also known as Coniah), who remained alive for some time in Babylon and did have important descendants. But God had declared him childless in regard to the throne, stating that none of his descendants would sit on the throne of David, ruling anymore in Judah (Jeremiah 22:30).

In fact, Jesus' adoptive father Joseph was a descendant of Jeconiah (Matthew 1:11, 16). Jesus thus had legal inheritance in this lineage, but if He had been the biological son of Joseph, He would have been disqualified from reigning on David's throne. Jesus was in fact by divine miracle the son of Mary, who was descended from David by a different line of descent (as the genealogy in Luke 3:23-31 is commonly understood to show).

So, did the killing of Zedekiah's sons truly mark the end of the David-

ic dynasty? It might have seemed so—even to Nebuchadnezzar, as he sought to eliminate further national uprising among the Jewish people. Yet perhaps unknown to him there was evidently another way the royal line could continue. We're told in Jeremiah 41:10 that a remnant of Judah in the land included "the king's daughters." They would have been young, possibly in their teens, as Zedekiah their father was only 32 when he died (see 2 Chronicles 36:11), and this was a few years after that.

We're further told in Jeremiah 42 and 43 that a group among the national remnant decided to leave the country to take refuge in Egypt in defiance of what God commanded them through Jeremiah. They took with them the king's daughters, as well as Jeremiah and his scribe Baruch against their will (Jeremiah 43:4-9).

They went to "Pharaoh's house" at Tahpanhes, or Daphne in Greek, a palace fortress on an eastern branch of the Nile River, where according to history Pharaoh Hophra had Greek and Carian mercenaries stationed from southwestern Turkey. It appears Hophra was providing asylum to the royal daughters of his late ally Zedekiah as part of his opposition to Nebuchadnezzar.

But to what avail? Could daughters inherit monarchy? Evidently so. We're told in Numbers 27:1-11 of the daughters of Zelophehad who came to Moses making the case that inheritance should pass to them since there were no sons to inherit, and God affirmed that they were right. And inheritance would then pass to their children. It seems this would also apply to the throne, and indeed it must for, as mentioned earlier, Christ is shown in Luke 3 to be an heir to the Davidic line through Mary, His mother.

All of this is significant in light of Jeremiah's commission to uproot and replant elsewhere and being appointed over nations and kingdoms. Is it mere coincidence that at the time of the destruction of Judah and its mon-

archy Jeremiah, who has this special commission, is sent out of the country with the king's daughters who were spared the killing of Zedekiah's family? No, this is *highly* significant, especially in light of other prophecies and historical factors.

Ezekiel's prophecy of transplanting the throne from Judah to Israel

Through the prophet Ezekiel, who was contemporary with Jeremiah, God fills in more details. Ezekiel was not in Jerusalem when it fell, but rather lived among the Jews who had been taken captive to Babylon a decade earlier. He specifically prophesied of the throne of Judah being transferred.

We find this in Ezekiel 17, where God through the prophet posed a riddle and parable to the house of Israel (verse 2)—*not Judah*—which He afterward explained. The people of the northern kingdom of Israel had been taken captive a century and a half before Judah, but the events being foretold were important to their future.

We'll just go through a few verses here, but you can find a more comprehensive explanation of this chapter in our online Bible commentary (which you can find at ucg.org/bible-study-tools).

Note the symbolism of verse 3: "A great eagle . . . came to Lebanon and took from the cedar the highest branch" (verse 3). Lebanon was a reference to the whole area of the Holy Land, called "this Lebanon" in Joshua 1:4, and not just the country bearing that name today. It especially designated the tall Lebanon cedars mentioned here, which were used in the royal buildings of Jerusalem. Thus Lebanon and the cedar here signify the land of Judah and its leaders in Jerusalem. We see the interpretation given in verse 12: "The king of Babylon went to Jerusalem and took its kings and princes."

Verse 4 states, "He cropped off the top of his young twigs" (King James

Is Recognizing Israelite National Identity Racist?

Although not commonly understood, the United States, Britain and other nations of northwest European heritage are in large measure descended from the ancient Israelites of the Bible. Yet many view this identification with contempt as racist. It's true that some believers in certain forms of what is termed British Israelism have been racially bigoted, the worst examples being those in the misnamed "Christian Identity" movement, which is heinously white supremacist and anti-Semitic. But the actual biblical teaching concerning the identity of Israel is in fact *anti-racist*.

The national blessings and position God has granted to the English-speaking peoples should be understood as a matter not of racial supremacy, but of family inheritance and responsibility. Nations began fundamentally as families grown large. And God says He intends to bless all peoples through the Israelites. Many Marxist agitators today seek to eradicate familial inheritance from society. But inheriting within a family, indeed the family of Israel, is at the very core of the purpose and plan of God for mankind.

It is a fact that God chose a particular man, the patriarch Abraham, and his descendants to fulfill a special role in the world. The Creator God has every right to grant blessings and assign duties to whomever He chooses. To Abraham and his son Isaac and grandson Jacob, who was renamed Israel, God made particular promises in these regards. This did not mean that they or their descendants were inherently superior to other people (Deuteronomy 7:7-8; 9:6). In fact, God is far more critical of the Israelites throughout the Scriptures than He is of other people groups, since they are judged according to their heritage of understanding and blessings. As Jesus stated, "For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required" (Luke 12:48).

Israelite ethnic heritage is not a cause for prideful boasting, though some have treated it as such. One of the primary purposes for the nation of Israel was to serve as an example for the rest of the world of what happens to a society that honors or rejects God. A number of prophecies concern Israel's great national blessings in this age and the age to come. But many others warn of terrible consequences to come on the Israelites as judgment for flagrant sin and rebellion against God.

It is not reasonable to label the directing of such biblical warnings to the intended recipients as racist. Nor is it racist to express appreciation for the positive aspects of national heritage. Rather, it is right and appropriate to focus on examples of virtue (Philippians 4:8), realizing that all human beings except for Jesus are terribly flawed.

The biblical record presents Israel's story in both its moral triumphs and tragedies, and we see the same in post-biblical history and in prophecy yet to be fulfilled. One important observation is that God selecting a particular people group for His holy purposes does not assure privileged ease for them—far from it! In the musical *Fiddler on the Roof*, the main character Tevye, reflecting a common Jewish sentiment in the wake of persecution, implores God, "Can't you choose someone else for a while!"

No follower of Jesus Christ should ever embrace or promote racism. God calls people out of "all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues" (Revelation

7:9). The Bible states that people of every ethnic background are the "offspring of God" (Acts 17:29), all with the potential of becoming glorified children in the divine family.

The apostle John wrote that God's love for *the whole world* motivated the sending of Jesus to die for people's sins (John 3:16). Moreover, God led the apostle Peter to declare: "In truth I perceive that *God shows no partiality*. But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him" (Acts 10:34-35, emphasis added). God does not judge us individually by our ancestry or the color of our skin but by who we are on the inside: "For the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart" (1 Samuel 16:7).

The Bible reveals that racial harmony will prevail when Christ rules the world in the Kingdom of God, with ancient enmity healed: "In that day



Israel will be one of three with Egypt and Assyria—a blessing in the midst of the land, whom the LORD of hosts shall bless, saying, 'Blessed is Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel My inheritance'" (Isaiah 19:24). Yet that does not make physical lineage irrelevant. Note that distinct ethnic nationalities will still exist during Christ's coming reign.

No follower of Jesus Christ should ever embrace or promote racism. God calls people out of "all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues."

Paul, the apostle to the gentiles, saw significance in his own ethnic lineage: "For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin" (Romans 11:1). Of course, our most important lineage is spiritual, having God as our Father through the Holy Spirit. Yet remarkably this is equated in Scripture with becoming a true Israelite. As Paul explained, Jesus Christ is the perfect Seed of Abraham, with all others disqualified from ultimate inheritance through sin—yet all who repent and are joined to Christ through receiving the Holy Spirit become Abraham's seed and coheirs with Christ as Israel, including those who are physically gentiles (Galatians 3; 6:16; Romans 2:28-29; 8:14-17; 9:1-8; 11; Ephesians 2:11-22).

It's important to understand that people of all nations must become Israelites to be saved. The divine family is in the end Israel in glory, the gates of the New Jerusalem in Revelation 21-22 bearing the names of the 12 tribes. Yet while that gives us the ultimate picture of the world blessed through Israel into eternity, we should see that God has blessed the world of this age in many ways through Abraham's progeny—principally through Jesus Christ but also through great benefits God has brought to the world through the family He has chosen. All this, from one end of the Bible to the other, shows that Israelite national inheritance is central to God's plan for humanity.

No, proclaiming who the Israelite peoples are today is not racist—as it recognizes what God has been doing over the centuries in working out His great plan to bless all peoples through Israel.



Version). The meaning? “And he took of the king’s offspring” (verse 13). Verse 4 shows the seed of the land, the people of Judah, being planted elsewhere to prosper.

Having explained the various symbols, God through the prophet then gave the following clear parable in verses 22-24: “I [God this time, not Nebuchadnezzar] will take also [a sprig, NRSV] of the highest branches [Zedekiah and the princes] of the high cedar [Judah] and set it out. I will crop off from the topmost of its young twigs [Zedekiah’s children] a tender one [of the daughters as the only survivors, the sons having been killed], and will *plant* it on a high and prominent mountain [a great kingdom or nation, as mountains often signify in prophecy].

“On the mountain height [the top of the kingdom, the throne] of *Israel* [not Judah!] I will plant it; and it will bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a majestic cedar. Under it will dwell birds of every sort [all manner of peoples] . . . And all the trees of the field [nations of the earth] shall know that I, the LORD, have brought down the high tree [Judah] and exalted the low tree [Israel]” (emphasis added throughout).

Nebuchadnezzar was transplanting the people of Judah to Babylon, but *God was transplanting what remained of Judah’s royalty family to Israel*. And the nation of Israel here was no longer in the Holy Land, but its people were ranging far abroad.

In parallel to this we should read again something earlier noted from

Jeremiah. He foretold in Jeremiah 33:17 that from that time on, “David shall never lack a man [a person] to sit on the throne of the house of *Israel*”—again, the house of Israel, not the house of Judah. Since the split in the kingdom under Solomon’s son Rehoboam, the Davidic kings had been ruling over the house of Judah. But now it’s stated that they will be reigning perpetually over the house of Israel. This lines up precisely with the prophecy of the throne being transplanted to the mountain or nation of Israel in Ezekiel 17, giving a double confirmation.

Historical transfer: legends in perspective

Putting these prophecies together with the commission Jeremiah was given of pulling down and replanting and rebuilding, along with the fact that the last we see of him is being outside the country with the king’s daughters, we can see what was happening—even if we don’t know exactly how. Jeremiah was conducting the transfer of the Davidic monarchy from Judah to Israel, as God had declared would happen.

But where were the far-ranging Israelites at this time? As explained in our free study guide *The United States and Britain in Bible Prophecy*, the northern tribes carried away by the Assyrians were at this later time in the process of migrating out of the Middle East and moving westward across Europe. And some early migrations by ship had already brought many Israelites to the west-

ern Mediterranean and around to the British Isles. In our next section we’ll show why Ireland must be the place to which the Davidic dynasty was transplanted at the time of Jeremiah.

It appears further that the transfer of the throne would have involved intermarriage between one of the king’s daughters of the Davidic line and a ruler among the northern tribes. But given that the scepter was to remain with Judah and not be predominantly of another tribe, it makes sense that the royalty among the scattered Israelites the king’s daughter would marry into was also Jewish, yet not thus far of the line of David.

Note again the issue mentioned earlier of the scarlet thread on the hand of Judah’s son Zarah yet Pharez being born first. Zarah’s descendants are barely mentioned in the Bible. The Jews in the Holy Land were mostly of Pharez. The Zarhites evidently migrated elsewhere. As presented in our online e-book *The Throne of Britain: Its Biblical Origin and Future*, there is evidence of people of Judah among the early Cretans, Greeks and Trojans, along with people of the tribe of Dan—the Danites sailing in ships early on along with the people of Javan or Greece (see Judges 5:17; Ezekiel 27:19).

Early Irish histories mention the Tuatha de Danaan as early settlers (the tribe of Dan). And there was later a takeover of Ireland by people called the Milesians, who came through Spain, these being traced back to the Greek/Carian city state of Miletus. (These were the same people

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who were in Daphne in Egypt guarding the Jewish king's daughters for the pharaoh.) If the Milesians are traced back to Miletus, then their entry into Ireland would be in the 500s B.C.—when this city-state was historically a colonizing power.

Note also that the Milesians who came to Ireland bore an emblem later known as the Red Hand of Ulster, in some imagery surrounded by a red cord. This seems very closely related to the scarlet thread of Zarah. And

ling things about doing archaeological work in Ireland is that the early medieval manuscripts preserve so many tales surrounding these sites. Some stories are clearly mythological, others are pseudohistory—medieval invention—and it isn't always easy to tell them apart . . .

“The study of Irish mythology and ancient manuscripts has been limited by a number of circumstances, beginning with a prohibition against owning Old Irish manuscripts during

ing this conclusion is knowing these prophecies about the throne transfer from Judah to Israel as well as the prophecies about where Israel would be, the foremost Israelite nations in the end time, and putting together from the world scene who these nations are today. Whichever of these has a prominent monarchy, the most prominent, that was transferred in from elsewhere, is the one with the monarchy of David.

And we can see that—very clearly. As our study guide lays out, the British and American peoples have inherited the birthright blessings of national greatness in the end time that were promised to Ephraim and Manasseh. If they haven't inherited these promises, who has?

And Britain has an ancient and enduring monarchy that for centuries has been the most prominent monarchy in the world. Queen Victoria ruled over a quarter of the earth, the British Empire being the greatest empire the world has ever seen!

And what of this monarchy being transferred in?

Ezekiel's prophecy of three overturns and a final one

Was the British monarchy transferred from elsewhere? Yes, from Scotland. King James VI of Scotland became James I of England, the first to style himself King of Great Britain. And the monarchy of Scotland was earlier transferred in from Ireland—by means of the overlapping Gaelic kingdom of Dal Riada, which stretched from northeastern Ireland to southwestern Scotland. And the Irish histories show that the Irish high kingship was transferred in by the Milesians, as mentioned earlier, evidently at the time of Jeremiah.

That fits well with another prophecy in Ezekiel, talking about the end of the monarchy in Judah under Zedekiah. In Ezekiel 21:26-27, God says to declare to the king (quoting the King James Version):

“Remove the diadem and take

Jeremiah was conducting the transfer of the Davidic monarchy from Judah to Israel, as God had declared would happen.

here would be a way of healing the breach between Zarah and Pharez—an intermarriage between the Pharez and Zarah dynasties.

We also have many other legends about various people in the transfer of the monarchy. The Irish have stories of an old prophet or king coming with a scribe and a royal daughter from the east—variously called Tamar or Tea Teph, along with the Lia Fail or Stone of Destiny.

The Scots, who came from Ireland, claim their royalty descended from a daughter of a pharaoh named Scota (which is maybe not an actual name but an eponym, a supposed founder of a people with the people's name applied to him or her). We can perhaps see some confusion here with an eastern ruler's daughter under a pharaoh's protection being called a pharaoh's daughter.

Our *Throne of Britain* e-book goes through various possibilities, and there are a number of ways this could have worked out. But we must be cautious in this. The records seem a jumble, and people in the story do not always fit together in time or role in the genealogical histories. This material is not reliable in many cases.

Consider the following quote from an anthropology professor in *Archaeology* magazine: “One of the compel-

ling the Reformation in the early seventeenth century. Book burnings were common and nearly all of the early Irish material was lost. There was no scholarship conducted until the 1830s, when some manuscripts that hadn't been destroyed began to come to light.

“Over the years, only a very few researchers could read Old Irish, and there are still relatively few today who can. In addition, the scholars and scribes who wrote the manuscripts often used an even earlier form of the Irish language, so translations can differ. Nonetheless, the manuscripts are crucial to any understanding of pre-Christian sites in Ireland” (Ronald Hicks, “The Sacred Landscape of Ancient Ireland,” May-June 2011, pp. 40-41).

And we might add that proper perspective about the limited trustworthiness of such source material is crucial in putting together this transfer history.

The main thing to realize is that we actually don't need all this to see that the transfer happened, as the Bible tells us it must have. Still, the fact that such information can highlight a variety of ways the specifics might have worked out is supportive of the overall conclusion.

What's actually necessary in grasp-



off the crown: This shall not be the same [a change or transfer was occurring]; exalt him that is low [the ruler in Israel, perhaps of the Jewish line of Zarah] and abase him that is high [Zedekiah of the line of Pharez through David, in line with the reversed positions we earlier saw in Ezekiel 17:24]. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it [the crown, that is, the throne]; and it shall be no more [overturned] until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him [Christ].”

The New King James Version here says “overthrown, overthrown, overthrown,” and that it “shall be no more,” meaning no longer exist until He come whose right it is. But that doesn’t make any sense. If it’s totally overthrown and doesn’t exist, how could it be given to anybody? It would be gone, especially if it were nonexistent for hundreds of years.

The Hebrew word translated “overthrown,” *avvah*, occurs only here. Some see the meaning as ruined or perverted, but the literal sense is likely derived from *avah*, meaning to turn or bend. It could conceivably concern distortion or displacement, fitting with the throne being moved or displaced from where it was supposed to be in the Holy Land and then further displaced.

It might alternatively concern the reversal of positions that comes with each transfer—abasement and exaltation, as we see in Ezekiel 17. In any case, being made overturned fits well with other related prophecies of uprooting and transplanting.

Assuming the reference is to three transfers, that fits what we know of the throne’s relocations. Working backward, the third overturn was from Scotland to England, where it still remains. The second overturn was from Ireland to Scotland. The first, then, would necessarily have been from Judah to Ireland. Yet this was probably not instant. The dynastic gap here could have been many years, as long as the throne was reestablished within a generation.

And again, rather than the verse saying the throne would be no more or not exist, it appears instead to say that the throne would be no more overturned until He comes whose right it is. This fits with Christ claiming the

scepter at His return according to the scepter promise.

And no more overturns *until* this point actually gives us a *fourth* overturn here—from England back to Jerusalem. And that may well include a gap in the monarchy due to—sad to say—the end-time prophesied Beast power, a coming revived Roman Empire, conquering Britain and toppling its government. (Again, see our free study guide.)

But if the monarchy collapses at that time, it will be restored a short time later by the return of Christ to rule.

Christ’s return to reign and share rule with His followers

The rightful heir to the throne will then return to claim it—this One whose throne it was to begin with will

We see a lot of problems in the house of David today. But beyond the trials of today God will bring redemption and restoration.

come as the Son of David and Son of God to reign over Jacob and all the world. That is the astounding future of the throne of Great Britain—as it is in truth the Israelite throne of David.

Yet Jesus will not reign on that throne alone. For as He promises His followers of this age, “To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne” (Revelation 3:21). He was given that coregency with the Father, but He will share that with *us*.

We’re told specifically that King David himself will be resurrected to reign over the Israelites (Jeremiah 30:8-9; Ezekiel 37:24-28). And Jesus further revealed that His 12 apostles “will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel” (Matthew 19:28).

So they’ll reign under David, who will reign under Christ. Revelation 20:4 refers to multiple thrones for the saints, yet these are all as part or extensions of Christ’s throne in Jerusalem. “At that time Jerusalem shall be called The Throne of the LORD, and all the nations shall be gathered to it” (Jeremiah 3:17).

The Jewish people have been without a king for all this time, but they will see the Messiah returning and will at last accept Him in heartfelt repentance. God’s Spirit will then be poured out on the remaining physical descendants of the house of David, the royal family, so they will then be converted (Zechariah 12:7–13:1). We see a lot of problems in the house of David today. But beyond the trials of this age God will bring redemption and restoration, leading us all to the future He has planned for us.

Amazingly, all of us who follow Jesus Christ are destined to be kings, to reign with Him in the Kingdom of God as the immortal family of God, the family of Israel in glory, on the throne of David—forever! BT

LEARN MORE



This amazing story of the biblical history of the British throne is spelled out in much greater detail in our free ebook ***The Throne of Britain: Its Biblical Origin and Future*** at ucg.org/Britain. To get an overview of this subject and more prophetic detail, download or request our free study guide ***The United States and Britain in Bible Prophecy***.

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The Gospel and the Throne of David

Our study guide *The United States and Great Britain in Bible Prophecy* details an amazing understanding from the Bible and history about the modern English-speaking nations being inheritors of the physical promises made to Abraham and his descendants. What exactly does such a story have to do with the gospel of Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of God? More than you think!

by Darris McNeely

Why did many millions of people around the world watch the funeral of Queen Elizabeth II, a 96-year-old woman who had reigned for 70 years? Why in a modern world are people fascinated by the person who wears the crown of Great Britain? Aren't kings and queens out of date and out of place in our modern technological world?

Could there be something more than mere celebrity and glamor connected with this ancient institution known as the British monarchy?

Britain's monarchy is among the oldest in the world. It's traced back to early English and Norman kings as well as rulers of Scotland. It's a constitutional monarchy, meaning the sovereign does not hold absolute power.

However, the British monarchy has a history and mystique that makes it unique among all current monarchies.

The attention, the fascination and the emotional impact of the Queen's passing points to something beyond this time. When we understand the full story, we see a lot more to the royal family than just wealth, fame, privilege and celebrity. We can conclude there is a connection to God, to biblical history, to vital understanding about today's world and to future prophecy.

Tracing to King David

In a column written just days after the death of Queen Elizabeth II, British journalist Melanie Phillips reflected on the critical role of the British monarchy to the unity of the United Kingdom. As the crowds poured into the streets, showing their devotion to the late monarch, Phillips wrote:

“Devotion . . . has a religious significance. In largely secular, godless Britain there is a strong element of the sacred in this relationship between the people and the Crown. The monarch in Britain is consecrated to a higher king . . . The oath that he takes is not to the people but to God. That's why his duty to serve the people is unbreakable. And that's why the monarch is a unifying force, and melds the people into a united nation. The royal family helps forge the country into a kind of national family” (“The Momentous Task for King Charles III,” Sept. 16, 2022).

Phillips then made a remarkable connection to a

With the Bible as our guide, we can understand today's world and what lies ahead for the nations.

biblical teaching: “Few also appreciate that *the British monarchy is patterned on ancient Israel*. It's why *the monarch is anointed*; it's why *Handel's 'Zadok the Priest, with its words taken from the first Book of Kings, has been sung [at coronations]* . . . Some British monarchs in the past have even purportedly *traced their line back to King David*” (emphasis added throughout—see a full reprint of her article beginning on page 24 of this issue of *Beyond Today*).

We should seriously consider what this British-based writer says. She is connecting current events—the death of Queen Elizabeth and the coronation of King Charles—with the elements of the long history of the British monarchy and ultimately to the Bible and the story of Israel and its most famous leader, King David.

This connection is vital to our understanding of not just this transition of leadership in the United Kingdom



and the other nations of the Commonwealth. It is a foundation for a biblical perspective on the world, what we call a *biblical worldview*. With the Bible as our guide, we can understand today's world and what lies ahead for the nations, particularly the English-speaking nations of Great Britain, America, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

The global impact Queen Elizabeth had in her life and death, and the coronation of a new monarch that follows, is a living witness to the truth that God's promises and covenants with the biblical patriarchs are relevant in today's world. Those promises continue to shape world events and will have even greater impact in the future.

The fact that the English-speaking nations of the world have accounted for most of the world's wealth and are still making a significant impact on the modern world is not a coincidence of history. It is connected to the purpose God is working out in history. This understanding is ultimately a part of the gospel or good news concerning the Kingdom that Jesus Christ will bring to the earth—the Kingdom of God.

Promises of what Jesus would do and be

In the Gospel of Luke, we see the angel's announcement to Mary that she would bear a son. He would be called Jesus and would be the Son of God. His destiny would be to receive the famous throne of David, Israel's greatest king.

This announcement is part of the gospel or good news of the Kingdom of God and its King and the means to entering it, Jesus Christ. It encapsulates all that Israel had hoped. It was the answer to the messages of all the prophets who had gone before. When fully understood, it points to the future intervention in the affairs of this world at Christ's second coming. Notice what it says:

“... The angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And . . . the angel said to her, ‘. . . You will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. He will be great, and will be called *the Son of the Highest*; and the Lord God *will give Him the throne of His father David*. And *He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end*” (Luke 1:26-33, emphasis added throughout).

In this announcement we have the heart of the gospel message. The Messiah, born of a virgin, would be “the Son of the Highest” and in fulfillment of many prophecies would be given authority forever through His Kingdom. Here is the gospel, the good news of Jesus Christ as King of Kings.

The throne of His Father David

Yes, that is what the Messiah, Jesus Christ of Nazareth,

is—the prophesied King of Israel who will reign over all nations. And as part of the assurance of these prophecies, God said that David's throne would endure through all generations. It has never ceased. It has continued to reign over Israelite peoples. And that is a testimony to what is yet to come.

The Kingdom of God is a literal realm that Christ will establish over all nations at His return. The announcement to Mary by the angel Gabriel was a prophecy as well. We should recognize that the throne of the Kingdom, on which Jesus Christ will reign, will be a continuation of the throne of King David who ruled over the nation of Israel as described in your Bible.

And what was that throne on which David sat? David was the second human king to reign over all Israel after Saul. What people often forget is that God was the first and true “King” of the tribes of Israel. The Israelites wanted a king like the other nations, and they went to the prophet Samuel and demanded he give them a king.

“But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, ‘Give us a king to judge us.’ So Samuel prayed to the LORD. And the LORD said to Samuel, ‘Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them. According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt, even to this day—with which they have forsaken Me and served other gods—so they are doing to you also’” (1 Samuel 8:6-8; compare 12:12).

God reigned over Israel from the time He delivered them from Egyptian bondage. While God gave them a physical king as they asked, it was still His throne—albeit delegated in part to a temporal human ruler.

God initially chose Saul but then, due to disobedience, removed him and selected David. Because David was a man after God's own heart, God promised him an enduring dynasty. Notice what God said: “Also the LORD tells you [David] that He will make you a house [ruling dynasty] . . . I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever . . . And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever” (2 Samuel 7:11-16).

In another reference this covenant with David's house is called a “covenant of salt” (2 Chronicles 13:5)—“salt” being a symbol of permanence. This promise is repeated in Psalm 89 (verses 3-4, 25-27) and again by the prophet Jeremiah (Jeremiah 33:17-26).

Some will say that Jesus fulfilled all this. But that's not true! Jesus at His first coming did not assume the throne but compared Himself to a nobleman who “went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to

return” (Luke 19:12).

The Jews and His disciples thought the Kingdom would be restored in their lifetime. But it was not to be then. It is to be *in a time yet future*. When He returns, Christ will sit on the throne of His father [or ancestor] David under completely different circumstances. It will be His rightful throne reserved according to a promise. As that member of the family of God who led the Israelites through the sea, Christ was the spiritual Rock accompanying them on which the nation was established (1 Corinthians 10:4).

A living witness

So, what happened to the Davidic dynasty? We see that the covenant was forever. That story is told through prophecies given through Jeremiah and Ezekiel. They are part of a connected trail of biblical events, prophecy and promises that form firm links to God’s enduring faithfulness to Abraham, his descendants and to all nations of the earth and all people. When viewed from the biblical perspective they give insights into the gospel of God to fulfill His purpose through Christ. The God who is bringing together all things in Christ has guided history through all its twists and turns to keep intact the key components of His promises and word.

Christ will return to earth and sit on the throne of His father [or ancestor] David. That throne still exists in the throne of Great Britain.

Based on these biblical passages we can conclude that someone, somewhere—who can trace a lineage back to King David—will be sitting, or eligible to sit, on the Davidic throne continuing in every generation until Christ returns to claim it for Himself. It is evident from the Gospel of Luke that Christ is the ultimate claimant: “He shall be great, and will be called the son of the Highest, and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David” (Luke 1:32).

But the prophecies cannot be fulfilled with Christ as the only claimant. (For more on this be sure to read “The Biblical Identity of Britain’s Royal Family” beginning on page 4.) The throne of David must exist somewhere today. Christ will come, His feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives and He will rule on the throne of His father David from Jerusalem. God has bound Himself by the rotation of the earth on its axis to fulfill these promises.

The fact that some British monarchs, including Queen Victoria (who reigned more than 63 years from 1837 until 1901), have believed the British monarchy descended from King David is a compelling story. While it will be denied, the genealogies do exist, and many people in or associated with the royal family believed this. It’s not a legend or collection of tortured and twisted interpreta-

tions of Scripture. It’s part of the fabric of connecting the Bible with relevant modern history. When understood, it adds a dimension of understanding to explain the modern world.

Inherent in the gospel of God is His promise to bring spiritual salvation to all peoples and nations through His Son Jesus Christ of Nazareth. All of God’s promises regarding His servants the prophets and His Son are sure and faithful. He fulfills them to the utmost detail, even if our human histories and records do not chronicle every event with the accuracy of modern methods and criteria. We must take as truth God’s promises to David. They are either true or not.

Why does this matter? Note that when Jesus was about to ascend to heaven, His disciples had one major question for Him: “Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” (Acts 1:6). So a vital, core message they understood from all their time with Christ was that of restoring Israel’s kingdom and exalting its throne through Him. His response was not to negate this key focus, but to tell them it was not for them to know the time this would happen and that they were to continue as Christ’s witnesses (verses 7-8).

At some point, Christ will return to the earth and sit on the throne of His father David. That throne still exists. In the throne of Great Britain we have a living witness to God’s purpose in today’s world. Christ is at the right hand of the Father in heaven waiting for the

time to return and establish a kingdom of righteousness—a kingdom not left to other people. A kingdom different from any kingdom today. This gives us confidence in God’s faithfulness to fulfill all His promises to all peoples.

What about Israel?

God’s enduring faithfulness to Abraham will reach its fullness when Jesus Christ sits on this throne of David in the coming Kingdom. Then Israel will be restored as a people whom Christ will use to teach the way of salvation to the nations.

This key truth explains why a disproportionate share of the world’s wealth is found today in the major English-speaking nations. God told Abraham his descendants would be a multitude of nations—a promise refined to Jacob as a nation and a company of nations (Genesis 35:11). Jacob passed on to his son Joseph those promises, saying that at the end of the age Jacob’s descendants would be a “fruitful bough” (Genesis 49:22).

That God has done this, kept His word, is a marker—a guarantee—that to all peoples and nations He will do the same. When the veil of deception is lifted from the nations, they will learn the way of God:

“Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the

mountain of the LORD's house shall be established on the top of the mountains and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow to it. Many people shall come and say, 'Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths.' For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem" (Isaiah 2:2-3).

The gospel of salvation will be taught from Jerusalem. There will be a time of restoration of blessings to Israel. The great question the apostle Paul asked about his people will be answered.

Paul knew the 10 tribes forming the northern kingdom of Israel had been taken captive centuries earlier and were now scattered among the nations, as were many of the two tribes that formed the southern kingdom of Judah. This is why the apostle James addressed his epistle "to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad" (James 1:1).

Paul, a former Pharisee, had taken the gospel to the Jews, and in the main they rejected the message. In a lament recorded in his letter to the Romans, Paul wished he could be accursed if that would allow his fellow Israelites to be saved (Romans 9:3).

He wrote: "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God" (Romans 10:1-3). Salvation has not come to Israel at large, but it will in the period of Christ's reign on earth.

God will restore Israel to a position He always intended—a nation being a light to the world: "Surely I have taught you statutes and judgments, just as the LORD my God commanded me, that you should act according to them in the land which you go to possess. Therefore be careful to observe them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes, and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people'" (Deuteronomy 4:5-6).

In the world to come, God will use Israel to teach all nations of the earth!

Notice how Paul brings this out: "Did God's people stumble and fall beyond recovery? Of course not! They were disobedient, so God made salvation available to the Gentiles. But he wanted his own people to become jealous and claim it for themselves. Now if the Gentiles were enriched because the people of Israel turned down God's offer of salvation, think how much greater a blessing the world will share when they finally accept it.

"I am saying all this especially for you Gentiles. God has appointed me as the apostle to the Gentiles. I stress this, for I want somehow to make the people of Israel jealous of what you Gentiles [in the Church] have, so I

might save some of them. For since their rejection meant that God offered salvation to the rest of the world, their acceptance will be even more wonderful. It will be life for those who were dead!" (Romans 11:11-15, New Living Translation).


He understood his people Israel had rejected God for a time and for a purpose. During that time Jesus Christ came and died, rejected by His own people so the door of salvation would be opened to the gentiles so they could be "enriched." Just as the work of spiritual salvation has not been finished with Israel, nor has it been finished with all the nations of the world. When Israel's "acceptance" in the time of restoration occurs, then the nations of the world will come to know the full gospel of God, and a time of salvation for all the world will begin.

Paul knew God had not cast off His people Israel. He knew their hope of life eternal would be fulfilled (Acts 26:6-7). God will restore the kingdom to Israel when Jesus of Nazareth sits on the throne He gave to David. Righteousness will finally be taught from that throne by the very King of Righteousness. God indeed has unfinished business with His people Israel.

God has not left us without witness today of His faithfulness and His intent to fulfill His grand purpose of salvation for all peoples. A modern monarchy sitting on a legendary throne whose roots can be traced to ancient Israel and King David is a witness God has provided.

Scoffing, denial and rejection of facts do nothing to change truth. God's Word is true. Some point to the foibles and faults of the British monarchy both present and as far back in the past as you wish to go. Some members of the royal family are indeed human and deeply flawed. Yet so was King David and many of his descendants who reigned in ancient Judah. Some of them were flagrantly evil. In spite of this, God has preserved the Davidic monarchy, faithfully holding to His purpose in every detail. Scripture points us to this. We have a witness!

As Melanie Phillips said in her article, quoted earlier, "Some British monarchs in the past have even purportedly traced their line back to King David."

There is a reason they did. There is more understanding and biblical truth here than most realize! 



LEARN MORE

There's much more to this remarkable story than we can cover in such a short amount of space. To get an overview of this subject, download or request our free study guide [The United States and Britain in Bible Prophecy](#). For much more detail, download our ebook [The Throne of Britain: Its Biblical Origin and Future](#) at ucg.org/Britain.

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Britain's Coronation Symbols: *The Astounding Story*

Embedded in the pageantry of the coronation of Britain's monarchs is a remarkable story—one that ties the British crown and throne to the kings and patriarchs of the Bible.

by Peter Eddington

When Queen Elizabeth II was crowned as head of church and state in 1953, highly meaningful symbols were used in the ceremony that have biblical and spiritual implications. Emblems of majesty and dominion contributed to the strength and dignity of this ancient throne. At its heart, this was a *religious act*.

When King Charles III, the new head of the Commonwealth, is crowned in May 2023, 70 years after his mother was, the same symbols will likely be brought forward in his time of solemn dedication as sovereign of the United Kingdom and other Commonwealth realms such as Australia, Canada and New Zealand.

His crowning will take place in a church building intended for the worship and service of God. The spiritual aspect of the ceremony will be by far the most important, and we cannot fail to be struck with the similarity between the coronation of Britain's rulers and that of the kings of the dynasty and lineage of ancient Israel's King David—called in the Bible “the house of David.”

Let's examine some of the symbols that were used in the crowning of Queen Elizabeth II, which most likely will also be part of the coronation ceremony of King Charles III.

The Holy Bible

The Holy Bible will be taken from



the church altar and presented to King Charles. If the ceremony follows that of Elizabeth II, the Archbishop of Canterbury, senior cleric of the Church of England, will then say these words: “Our gracious king, to keep your Majesty ever mindful of the law and Gospel of God as rule for the whole life and government of Christian princes, we present you with this Book, the most valuable thing that this world affords.”

This is very reminiscent of the command given to kings by God in Deuteronomy 17. There a newly chosen king was instructed to read the words of God all the days of his life so

that he would learn to fear the Lord his God, keep all the words of the law and statutes, living and governing by them (verses 18–19).

The anointing

What follows will no doubt be the most important aspect of King Charles' crowning. He will be anointed with specially prepared oil on the palms of his hands, on his breast and on the crown of his head. The words then spoken will harken back to the anointing of King Solomon himself. Here is what was said when Elizabeth II was anointed:

“Be thy hands anointed with holy oil.

“Be thy breast anointed with holy oil.

“Be thy head anointed with holy oil, as kings, priests, and prophets were anointed:

“And as Solomon was anointed king by Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet, so be thou anointed, blessed and consecrated Queen over the peoples, whom the Lord thy God hath given thee to rule and govern, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.”

These words emphasize that the coronation of the Queen or King is not a civic ceremony, but rather a religious service for setting apart a person for a *holy office*—a *divinely appointed position*. The British people see the king as “the Lord's anointed,” the representative to the people of the King of Kings.



The prayer at the conclusion of the anointing of King Ethelred II, who was crowned in A.D. 978, very much illustrates the biblical roots of the Angles and Saxons, ancestors of today's English people. A portion of it states:

“May the Almighty bless thee with the blessings of the heaven above . . . and may the blessing of the ancient fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, be heaped upon thee!”

In the full prayer for King Ethelred, the references to verses in the Old Testament are very relevant—for the kings of the ancient house of David were anointed just as King Charles will be anointed.

The spurs and sword

Following the anointing of the king comes the delivery of the regalia—the spurs and the sword. These insignia

The St. Edward's crown—the crown of England—will most likely be used for the actual coronation of King Charles III.

of office, presented after the king is anointed, are tokens that he is now a *consecrated sovereign*—a ruler set apart for God's service.

The touching of the spurs, an emblem of chivalry, and the girding of the sword, are then both offered on the altar in the church—signifying the king's intent, under God, to rule in justice, equity and mercy. Scripture reminds us in Zechariah 7:9–10 of this key responsibility.

The royal robe and orb

The royal robe of cloth and gold is then placed on the king by the Dean of Westminster, with the Lord Great Chamberlain fastening the clasps. If history repeats itself, the archbishop will state: “Receive this imperial robe, and the Lord your God endue you with knowledge and wisdom, with majesty and with power from on high: the Lord clothe you with the robe of righteousness and with

garments of salvation. Amen.”

The orb, the golden sphere with the cross on top meant to symbolize the sovereignty of Christ over the world, is then brought from the altar by the dean and delivered into the king's hand by the archbishop, who exhorts: “Receive this orb set under the cross, and remember that the whole world is subject to the power and empire of Christ our Redeemer.”

The ring and scepters

The ring, which is placed on the fourth finger of the monarch's right hand, is often referred to as “the wedding ring of England.” The king is symbolically married to the nation. And the ring is a symbol of power and honor.

After putting on the ring, the archbishop places into the king's hands two scepters or royal rods, one with a

surrounded by diamonds.

Of interest and relevance is the fact that the high priest of ancient Israel wore a breastplate set with 12 precious stones to represent the unity of the 12 tribes. And in the book of Revelation we read of the New Jerusalem having 12 foundations of these



precious stones, showing lasting unity and strength.

If the ceremony follows that of Elizabeth II, the archbishop will lay the crown on the altar and pray the following:

“O God, the crown of the faithful: Bless we beseech thee this crown, and so sanctify thy servant Charles upon whose head this day thou dost place it for a sign of royal majesty, that he may be filled by thine abundant grace with all princely virtues: through the King Eternal Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.”

Then the archbishop will come from the altar and reverently place the crown on the king's head—the king still sitting in King Edward's Chair. At this point the people will repeatedly shout, “God save the king!”

And so, we are reminded again of the deep biblical and spiritual significance of the coronation service. It is similar to the rejoicing and coronation of King Solomon,

cross and the other with a dove. The first represents kingly power and justice through Christ, while the second pictures equity and mercy through the Holy Spirit.

We find in the Bible similar imagery with allusions to the scepter as representative of regal authority and symbol of righteous administration: “But to the Son He says: ‘Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom’” (Hebrews 1:8).

The crown

At the conclusion and climax of the coronation ceremony, after being invested with the insignias and emblems of royalty, the king will then receive his crown.

The St. Edward's Crown—the crown of England—will most likely be used for the actual coronation. The rim of the crown is encircled with 12 large stones of varied colors, each

and deliberately so.

The chair and “Stone of Destiny”

The oak coronation chair on which the king will be seated dates from the time of King Edward I (who reigned from 1239 to 1307). King Edward had the chair specially designed to

And this harkens back to the use of a pillar stone in the coronation ceremonies of kings of the line of David in ancient Judah—as we see mentioned in regard to Kings Joash and Josiah (2 Chronicles 23:13; 2 Kings 11:12-14; 23:3). This was conceivably the same stone Jacob anointed.

ended, all the people will shout: “*God save King Charles. Long live King Charles. May the king live forever!*”

This reminds us of the support, submission and loyalty ancient Israel gave King Solomon: “Then Solomon sat on the throne of the LORD as king instead of David his father, and pros-

The oak coronation chair on which the king will be seated dates from the time of King Edward, who reigned from 1239 to 1307.

(You can read much more about the history and traditions surrounding this stone in our free eBook *The Throne of Britain: Its Biblical Origin and Future* at ucg.org/britain.)

The enthronement

King Charles will then go to his throne and be lifted up into it by the archbishop and other bishops and noble peers. And then all the assembled officers and nobles will, if as before, say in conclusion:

“... *And the Lord God Almighty, whose ministers we are, and the stewards of His mysteries, establish your throne in righteousness, that it may stand fast forevermore...*”

The earlier form of the coronation ceremony, 1937 and before, added the words, “... *like as the sun before him, and as the faithful witness in heaven. Amen.*”

This final phrase of the enthronement speech was spoken in Scripture in reference to the throne of David, the throne of the Lord over Israel: “Once I have sworn by My holiness; I will not lie to David: His seed *shall endure forever*, and his throne as the *sun before Me*; it shall be established forever like the moon, even like the *faithful witness in the sky*” (Psalm 89:35-37, emphasis added).

(Be sure to read “The Biblical Identity of Britain’s Royal Family” beginning on page 4.)

“God save the king!”

When the coronation service is

performed; and all Israel obeyed him. All the leaders and the mighty men, and also all the sons of King David, submitted themselves to King Solomon” (1 Chronicles 29:23-24).

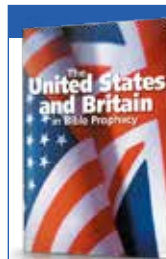
Not only the coronation, but the people of the Commonwealth and their brother English-speaking nation, the United States, are linked and bound up in the Bible. It’s all part of an astounding story stretching back thousands of years.

There’s a reason the laws of the nations of the British Empire and the United States are based on the Bible. There’s a reason their families have fought for justice only Jesus Christ can bring. The story of the nations of the British Empire and the United States bear witness to the power of God even as their people pray for His Kingdom to come. The very throne of David is embedded in the royal throne of Britain—to which, as foretold in Isaiah 9:7, Jesus Christ will return and claim as His own! **BT**

enclose under the seat a remarkable relic brought to England from Scotland—the Stone of Scone, or Stone of Destiny, on which Scottish kings had been crowned. The stone was returned to Scotland in 1996 but is being temporarily brought to London for the crowning. It’s the oldest item still used today in the coronation ceremony.

The Stone of Destiny is an oblong block of sandstone 26 inches long by 16 inches wide and 10½ inches deep. Similar stone is found near Bethel in modern-day Israel. Tradition claims this is the very stone Abraham’s grandson Jacob used as a pillow the night he had his famous dream of angels ascending and descending a staircase which reached to heaven. Jacob blessed and anointed the stone with oil and may have later taken it with him as a special possession (Genesis 28:11–18).

Many British monarchs have been crowned on the Stone of Destiny.



LEARN MORE

How did a small island nation and a group of its colonies huddled on the coast of a faraway continent grow into the most powerful empire and nation in world history?

The remarkable story was foretold in the Bible and is described in our free study guide *The United States and Britain in Bible Prophecy*. Download or request your free copy today!

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British leadership and people undergoing major transitions

With the death of Queen Elizabeth II and the accession of King Charles III to the British throne, the United Kingdom is going through a period of transition in a number of major respects.

The international agenda of the World Economic Forum is advancing, with global issues like Covid and the supposed existential threat of climate change being used to promote the drive toward worldwide socialist utopianism. Notes one source: "The globalists around WEF founder Klaus Schwab will be happy that two seats of the highest offices on the island are now being occupied by people from their circle.

"The former Prince of Wales was one of the people who were the first to openly acknowledge the world transformation under the guise of sustainability via the 'Great Reset.' When Schwab published his manifesto,



Britain's King Charles III, left, and Prime Minister Rishi Sunak.

Charles presented the 'Great Reset Project' at the WEF on the same day. He spoke of a 'golden opportunity' in which there is only a limited window of opportunity for a power grab enabled by technology. He spoke of a 'global Marshall Plan' and in this context praised the 'calls for action in the wake of the Great Reset'... [saying it's] 'a moment where we should make as much progress as possible'" ("Great Reset' King Charles III Set to Rule After Queen Elizabeth II Passes Away," Free West Media, Sept. 9, 2022).

"For more than 40 years, Charles had championed environmental causes, including the need to transition the global economy off of fossil fuels so as to avert a climate catastrophe. In November, at the start of COP 26, the United Nations climate change conference in Glasgow, Scotland, Charles said climate change was an 'existential threat to the extent that we have to put ourselves on what might be called a war-like footing' and called on world governments to begin 'radically transforming our current fossil fuel based economy to one that is genuinely renewable and sustainable'...

"In 2020, Charles addressed the World Economic Forum, calling for 'a shift in our economic model that

places nature and the world's transition to net zero [carbon emissions] at the heart of how we operate.'

On the death of his mother he did speak of a changed role, as the British monarch traditionally is not to weigh in on what could be seen as political matters. He stated he would no longer be able to give so much time and energies to charities and issues he cared deeply about but knew others would take over in that ("King Charles III Appears to Signal an End to Climate Change Activism," Yahoo News, Sept. 9, 2022). He may not need to say much, given other shifts in government.

Britain just had three prime ministers over the course of three months, with Boris Johnson being replaced by Liz Truss for only 45 days. "Truss' departure... sparked jubilation for the tabloid *Daily Star*, which had set up a livestream... featuring a photo of the prime minister beside a head of lettuce to see which would last longer. 'This lettuce outlasted Liz Truss!' it proclaimed...

"While many Britons joined the world in laughing at the lettuce joke, Bronwyn Maddox, director of international affairs think-tank Chatham House, said 'there is no question that the U.K.'s standing in the world has been severely battered by this episode and by the revolving door of prime ministers'" ("Truss Quits, But UK's Political and Economic Turmoil Persists," AP, Oct. 20, 2022).

Replacing Truss is "Britain's former Chancellor of the Exchequer (finance minister) Rishi Sunak, best known for signing the cheques on the mega-money lockdown policies of the Covid era and pushing the national tax burden to the highest levels in decades" (Oliver Lane, "Coronation: Covid-Era Tax and Spend Rishi Sunak Makes It Through Leadership Challenge Unopposed, Will Be Prime Minister," Breitbart, Oct. 24).

At 42, Sunak is the youngest prime minister in more than 200 years and the first of non-European heritage. He's the first with South Asian roots and the first to be a practicing Hindu. "When he became an MP, he swore his oath on the Hindu holy book, the Bhagavad Gita... [And] he became Prime Minister on the first day of Diwali, the religion's most important festival" ("... Everything You Want to Know About New British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak," Webdundia, Oct. 25, 2022).

Some concerns have been expressed: "A Hindu Prime Minister is now responsible for advising King Charles on appointments to the Church of England. Britain is dead," said Collin Pruett at The American Conservative... As per media reports, Sunak always keeps an idol of Shri Ganesh [the elephant-headed god

of beginnings] on his table" (Sounak Mukhopadhyay, "Rishi Sunak's Religious Identity Under Radar as Christian UK Gets First Hindu Prime Minister," LiveMint.com, Oct. 25, 2022).

Yet perhaps this should not be so surprising, given the decline of British heritage and of Christianity in the nation, as we note more about in a separate news story (on the next page).

Returning to the prime minister, he was formerly an investment banker with Goldman Sachs and is married to the daughter of a billionaire, the sixth-richest man in India. "Sunak has the distinction of being so wealthy, with an estimated combined net worth of £730 million (\$825 million) alongside his wife, that he will reportedly be the first inhabitant of Number 10 Downing Street to have a larger fortune than the reigning British monarch, leading to questions about his ability to empathise with the plight of the common man during the economic crisis, which he, in part, helped to create" (Kurt Zindulka, "Coup Complete: Globalist Rishi Sunak Installed as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom," Oct. 25, 2022).

Like Canada's Justin Trudeau, "Sunak is an acolyte of the World Economic Forum (WEF) and even gained the tacit endorsement of the Chinese Communist Party as a leadership candidate" (Lane, Oct. 24).

"Sunak appeared at the World Economic Forum's Green Horizon Summit in 2020 to advocate for a 'whole of economy transition' to 'green energy' sources. 'The challenge of climate change is clear and it is urgent,' Sunak said. 'We need to ensure a positive and fair transition to Net Zero and protect our environment'" (Zindulka, Oct. 25). Sadly, this would end up stripping Britain of its wealth and energy, but that is part of the globalist agenda.

"The connection to the WEF does not stop there, however, as the company founded by his father-in-law N.R. Narayana Murthy, Infosys, is a listed partner of the World Economic Forum. Murthy also previously served as co-chairman for the World Economic Forum meeting in Davos in 2005" (ibid.).

Populist statesman Nigel Farage tweeted on Oct. 24 that the ERG (European Research Group, a caucus of anti-EU members of Parliament) was not able to support any candidate for prime minister because "the globalist coup has succeeded. There is no Conservative party. It is dead."

The globalist agenda has captured many leaders of Western nations. Where is it all heading? And what does this mean for the future of Britain and other nations of British heritage—Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the United States? To better understand, read our free study guides *The Final Superpower* and *The United States and Britain in Bible Prophecy*, available at BTmagazine.org/booklets.

Gay marriage codified—persecution of dissenters next?

In December 2022 U.S. lawmakers passed what's called the "Respect for Marriage Act." The purpose was supposedly to guarantee the legality of same-sex marriage nationwide out of concern that the Supreme Court's 2015 *Obergefell* decision to legalize homosexual marriage might be overturned, as recently happened to the longtime *Roe v. Wade* abortion ruling. But the aims of the legislation are evidently more far-reaching.

Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Tex.) opposed the bill, stating in a September podcast that the bill would punish religious institutions. "This bill, without a religious liberty protection, would have massive consequences across our country, weaponizing the Biden administration to go and target universities, K-12 schools, social services organizations, churches and strip them all of their tax-status," Cruz stated. "That is enormously consequential" (quoted by Todd Starnes, Nov. 16).

The bill was amended to supposedly include protections to such problems, but religious liberty proponents argue this wouldn't keep traditional marriage advocates from being targeted, as the amendment language has no teeth.

Commentator Liz Wheeler pointed out three major problems with the bill as it was being passed:

"First, the bill amounts to a direct assault upon religious liberty. The . . . secular mob will undoubtedly use this law to target people of faith. They will target non-profit organizations. They will target churches. They will target religious schools. You won't be able



to conduct business under the premise of the biblical definition of marriage or you will likely come under fire . . . it even creates a cultural justification for market institutions such as banks to discriminate against people with traditional views . . .

"The second problem: this bill gives government the power to redefine words. This has nothing to do with sexual orientation or sexual attraction. It's about the definition of the word marriage, and whether government at the federal or state level has the right to redefine what marriage is . . .

"Third—and perhaps most importantly—the bill will inherently become a legal catch-all for the . . . radical progressive agenda, which hinges upon the deliberate Marxist goal of destroying the nuclear family and ultimately deconstructing our society's moral fiber" ("Twelve Republican Senators Betrayed the Institution of Marriage," Daily Caller, Nov. 27, 2022).

"So truth fails," the Creator God says of our wayward society, "and he who departs from evil makes himself a prey" (Isaiah 59:15). But that's not the last word on the matter. God's intervention is coming—severe judgment on this world's evils to thankfully be followed by redemption and salvation for those who repent (verses 16-21). Do your utmost to stand with God, upholding the morality revealed through His Word. To learn more, download or request our free study guide *Marriage and Family: The Missing Dimension*.

British heritage declining, less than half now Christian

Surprisingly, as the Associated Press reports, "fewer than half the people in England and Wales consider themselves Christian, according to the most recent census—the first time a minority of the population has followed the country's official religion. Britain has become less religious—and less white—in the decade since the last census" ("Census: Christians a Minority in England; Non-Religious Grow," Nov. 29, 2022).

Breaking this down, "some 46.2% of the population of England and Wales described themselves as Christian on the day of the 2021 census, down from 59.3% a decade earlier. The Muslim population grew from 4.9% to 6.5% of the total, while 1.7% identified as Hindu, up from 1.5%. More than 1 in 3 people—37%—said they had no religion, up from 25% in 2011" (ibid.).

The chief executive of the charity Humanists U.K. was remarkably able to say that "the dramatic growth

of the non-religious" had made the U.K. "almost certainly one of the least religious countries on Earth" (ibid.). What a sad commentary for the British people, who have historically been blessed by God so abundantly among the nations.

Religion and culture are being transformed. As conservative columnist Melanie Phillips writes: "The findings of the 2021 census . . . reveal a country that is becoming unrecognizable before our eyes. Britain's two largest cities, London and Birmingham, are now minority white British" ("An Altered State," Nov. 30). And she further notes the decline of Christianity by 17 percent and the rise of Islam by 43 percent.

She goes on to comment: "The significance of these changes does not lie in skin colour but in the fact that minority cultures are increasing while the majority culture is waning. Statisticians have welcomed this as the development of a 'multicultural society.' But this is

an oxymoron. While a multi-ethnic society is possible, there is no such thing as a 'multicultural society.'"

Moreover, she explains, "Christianity has been the glue that held Britain together. The decline of Christianity means Britain is becoming increasingly unglued. And the vacuum left by the retreat of Christianity doesn't mean people are losing the impulse to religious faith. The vacuum is being filled by religious faith turned upside down—the growth of paganism, witchcraft and shamanism . . . cults, irrational conspiracy theories . . . man-made ideologies such as apocalyptic climate change [and] Islam is rising."

What a sad mess—leading toward ultimate national collapse. This is all heading to severe times ahead, with hard lessons learned. Let us pray for the day when Britain and all nations are led back to God and His ways—and to the wonderful blessings that then will abound for all people.

How can you make sense of the news?

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The Momentous Task for King Charles III

With the Queen's death, might a Britain of priceless value also be passing?

by Melanie Phillips



Editor's note: *Melanie Phillips is a longtime British Jewish journalist, columnist, commentator and author of 11 books on important social and geopolitical issues. With permission we are reprinting her commentary from Sept. 16, 2022, on the passing of Queen Elizabeth II and the fact that, as she puts it, "the British*

monarchy is patterned on ancient Israel." We share it with our readers here for its remarkable historical insights and implications for today.

For the past week, normal life in Britain has effectively been put on hold as the country has undergone an astonishing catharsis.

Since the death of the Queen, emotional scenes on the streets have been played out day by day as her casket has progressed, in full public view, from Balmoral Castle in Scotland where she died to her lying-in-state in London before her funeral on Monday.

At every stage of her final journey, vast crowds have lined the route to stand in silence as her hearse has slowly passed by.

Now her casket—draped with the royal standard and bearing the crown and a simple wreath of white flowers—rests on a catafalque under the soaring Norman arches of Westminster Hall as the public, in lines snaking for many miles through London's streets, file silently past, some bowing their heads, many in tears.

The new King Charles III, who has been visiting every constituent nation of the United Kingdom, has touched many with his visible grief, his expressions of love for his mother and his pledge to emulate her example of selfless public service.

The word that springs to mind from these affecting scenes is devotion: the late Queen's devotion to the people, and their devotion to her.

Devotion, of course, has a religious significance. In largely secular, godless Britain there is a strong element

of the sacred in this relationship between the people and the Crown.

The monarch in Britain is consecrated to a higher king. At the coronation—which will take place next year—Charles will be anointed. The oath that he takes is not to the people but to God.

That's why his duty to serve the people is unbreakable. And that's why the monarch is a unifying force, and melds the people into a united nation. The royal family helps forge the country into a kind of national family.

Citizens of republics often find it hard to appreciate the benefits of a constitutional monarchy. By enshrining the identity of the nation above and beyond temporal politics, the constitutional monarch acts as a focus for unity often denied to countries that have instead elected presidents as their head of state.

Few also appreciate that the British monarchy is patterned on ancient Israel. It's why the monarch is anointed; it's why Handel's "Zadok the Priest," with its words taken from the first Book of Kings, has been sung at every English coronation since 973 CE. Some British monarchs in the past have even purportedly traced their line back to King David.

True, ancient Israel was a theocracy and was also eventually destroyed by internal divisions. Nevertheless, it developed a concept of governance that was to serve as a template for both Britain and America.

The genius of the monarchy invented by King David was that it brought together, as one governable nation, otherwise disparate and potentially warring tribes.

Even more revolutionary was the ancient Israelites' concept of limited governance. Their king didn't enjoy absolute power. He was constrained from below by the authority vested in priests, prophets and judges, and from above by the belief that the supreme ruler whose laws even the king had to follow was the Almighty himself.

During the 17th-century English civil war, which led to the system of parliamentary government under the Crown, political thinkers looked to Judaism for the answer to many questions about the relationship between

scripture, sovereigns and subjects.

Under Oliver Cromwell, some even advocated turning parliament into a *sanhedrin* or supreme council patterned on the biblical high court of Judea.

Just as Britain's constitutional monarchy is generally not understood in republican countries, nor is the relationship in Britain between church and state in which the Crown plays a central role.

Britain has an established church in the Church of England. Because it is benign and tolerant, it acts as a protective umbrella for other minority faiths such as Judaism. It prevents a contest for power between faiths in which Judaism would be the loser.

The monarch is the Defender of the Faith, meaning

Principles of duty to others, humility and gratitude for the world's many gifts originated in the Bible. The Queen embodied and upheld these values.



Protestantism. The Queen, who treated this role with the utmost seriousness, was a devout Christian. In 1994, when Charles was Prince of Wales, he caused no little consternation when he said he wanted to be not Defender of the Faith but “defender of faith.”

Long attracted by elements of Islam in particular, he believes all faiths are linked by a common spirituality that promotes the unity of the natural world.

This raised fears among many British Jews (and others) that he would promote a multi-faith mishmash and thus undermine the protection that the Jews have enjoyed. However, he explained that he merely wanted to use his Christian standpoint to offer protection to other faiths.

And in his first address to the nation after his mother's death, he pledged to uphold the sovereign's particular responsibility towards the Church of England.

The King has shown much friendship and warmth towards British Jews. However, many Jews have interpreted

the failure by his mother ever to visit Israel as a signal of antipathy to the Jewish people within the royal family.

This is a misunderstanding. The royals undertake no engagements overseas unless the UK Foreign Office wants them to do so. And British government ambivalence about the Jewish national home goes back to the Mandate period in the 1930s and 1940s, when Britain betrayed its obligation to settle the Jewish people throughout Palestine.

In fact, first Prince William and then Prince Charles, as he then was, did make official visits to Israel in 2018 and 2020 which were almost certainly due to a shift in the government's attitude. This was caused by an increasing number of pro-Israel ministers in the Conservative administrations of Theresa May and Boris Johnson, combined with the developing relationship with Israel by the Gulf states towards which the British govern-

ment has long been obsequious.

It is an irony that today's State of Israel, the direct heir to the ancient Davidic kingdom, doesn't have a monarchy. Maybe that's one reason why its internal divisions are so raw—and potentially so dangerous to its long-term health.

Although America was created by rejecting the British Crown, the Hebrew Bible is integral to foundational American institutions and laws. The Liberty Bell is engraved with an inscription from Leviticus: “Proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof.” America's founding fathers made repeated reference to Biblical sources.

Few, however, acknowledge the central importance of Biblical values—which have been under sustained assault for decades from secular ideologies such as moral and cultural relativism—in underpinning the west. Principles such as duty to others, humility and gratitude for the world's many gifts originated in the Hebrew Bible.

The Queen embodied and upheld these values. Unlike Charles, who took a stand on a number of issues as Prince of Wales, no-one ever knew what his mother thought. Avoiding anything that might cause division, she thus simply embodied selflessness, stoicism and public service. And like Judaism itself, she also radiated hope in the future.

That's why she was so loved. That's why there has been such terrible grief in Britain over the death of a 96-year-old woman—because people fear that, with her death, so too a Britain is passing that once stood for the principles and the society that she personified.

We wait to see whether King Charles III, the latest British monarch in the Davidic tradition, will similarly rise to that momentous task. [BT](#)

(Available online at melaniephillips.substack.com/archive.)

The Faith of Queen Elizabeth II

She lived her life in service to God and country. Her death brought a solemn moment to reflect on the sacred. Elizabeth II was a monarch for the ages. What lessons can we learn from her faith?

by Darris McNeely

For 11 days last September, 2022, the world turned its attention to Great Britain to watch the pageantry of the funeral of Queen Elizabeth II. As only the British can do, the state produced a display of regal majesty, a “pomp and circumstance” long in the preparing (and planned by the queen long before her passing).

Crowds of people watched her body proceed from Balmoral Castle in Scotland, where she died, to London where she lay in state at Westminster Hall.

The turnout put to rest the questions of the value of the Crown to life in the kingdom. She was loved and respected, as shown by the thousands who came to return a small measure of the service she rendered for their benefit.

The days leading to her funeral gave opportunity to reflect on a long life and reign. The Queen embodied certain values in her life—values we would do well to consider in light of many Bible passages that tell us we as Christians will one day sit with Jesus Christ on a throne judging the nations under His rule.

The Bible clearly shows that the saints, Christ’s followers of this age, will then reign with Him on earth. It is a key truth of Scripture that is little understood. Jesus told His apostles, “I bestow upon you a kingdom, just as My Father bestowed one upon Me, that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel” (Luke 22:29-30).

A broader promise in this regard is given to all the saints in Revelation 20:4-6: “And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was

committed to them . . . And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years . . . Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection . . . they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.” Many more scriptures confirm this truth.

Looking at the life of Queen Elizabeth II gives us a moment to think about qualities within our reach in this life and practical principles that prepare us for the life to come.

Let’s first consider the Queen was the titular head of the Church of England. One of her titles was “Defender of the Faith.” By all accounts she was a person of deep faith.

As I watched her funeral service in Westminster Abbey, I was struck at the scriptures she chose to have read. It seemed as if in her death she witnessed to the world about God. The order of service began with two readings, the first from John 11:25-26: “I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die” (King James Version).

The next passage, from Job 19:25-27, begins, “I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth” and also focuses on the resurrection of the dead.

Prime Minister Liz Truss read the words of John 14:1-9, which include Jesus saying, “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (KJV).

This was not an ecumenical service meant to appeal to the assembled dignitaries representing many faiths

and none at all. This was a display of Scripture, readings and songs meant to say, “*This is what I believe.*”

Elizabeth’s life was caught up in the British monarchy, which in turn is intertwined with the Christian faith. The Bible is read at the monarch’s coronation. The Queen made an oath to God to serve and carry out her role.

Modern people do not like the idea of a monarch because of this. It reminds them of God, the Bible and of something absolute and immutable. Elizabeth rode above politics and the changing times. So many said that with her death an era where values meant something also finally died.

Service to others

When King George VI died in 1952, Elizabeth assumed the role of queen. On her 21st birthday Elizabeth had pledged: “My whole life, whether it be long or short, shall be devoted to your service and the service of our great imperial family to which we all belong.”

She kept her promise. For the next seven decades, she worked almost every day. She traveled to many nations doing what a modern monarch does. She opened schools and libraries. She stood and greeted countless strangers for hours. She did it all with grace and joy.

While the queen lived in palaces and had a large staff and household servants to serve her, with a life far easier in many respects than what most people face, we should step back and remember that she was still human with all the pulls and pressures common to us all—and that wealth and privilege actually magnify

some problems, especially in terms of maintaining good character. Like everyone, she loved and was unloved. She laughed and cried. She rejoiced and sorrowed. She was loyal and suffered betrayal. As she looked at the world through the palace windows, did she ever wish she could live the normal life of a shopkeeper, teacher and ordinary mother?

Early on she knew hers was a different life. But she was determined to serve within that life. During World War II she volunteered as a car



The Queen made an oath to God to serve and carry out her role. With her death an era of meaningful values may have died.

mechanic and rolled up her sleeves to do the dirty work. She and her family stayed in England, not taking refuge in Canada. Given their high profile, it was a grave risk they measured and took.

As grand as her life was, Elizabeth was concerned about maintaining the type of serving attitude taught by Jesus. When His disciples argued among themselves about who would be the greatest, He said, “The kings of the Gentiles [or nations] exercise lordship over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called ‘benefactors.’ But not so among you; on the contrary, he who is greatest among you, let him be as the

younger, and he who governs as he who serves” (Luke 22:25-26).

Christ said the greatest would serve. Elizabeth strove to serve and set a right example according to what she understood. Such focus should be celebrated!

Commitment to responsibilities

The Queen served more than 75 years on the job. She pledged that her whole life, “whether . . . long or short,” would be devoted to service. Such a promise takes commitment—the type of commitment taught by Jesus when He said that no one who comes to Him while looking backward to his old life is fit for God’s Kingdom (Luke 9:62).

Think about this: Elizabeth did not go back on her commitment. Her parents were Edwardians—think *Downton Abbey*, a different world than ours. She was raised in that environment. Her uncle, Edward VIII, abdicated the throne. He rejected the committed life for a frivolous lifestyle. Elizabeth became queen because one man did not live up to his commitment. She knew she had to commit to the end to preserve the monarchy.

At her coronation she was anointed

with these words: “*Be thy hands anointed with holy oil. Be thy breast anointed with holy oil. Be thy Head anointed with holy oil, as kings, priests and prophets were anointed. And as Solomon was anointed king by Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet, so be you anointed, blessed and consecrated Queen over the peoples, whom the Lord your God hath given you to rule and govern . . .*”

This was done at the most solemn moment of the coronation, a golden canopy hiding this part of the service from the sight of the crowd. She was set aside for a special role, and she understood that. She was committed

to this. She never turned from that commitment. She cared deeply about her land and her people and did whatever she could for their benefit. People today could learn a lot from her example!

Duty to God and country

Duty is doing something you ought that you’d rather not do—not because someone makes you, but because it needs to be done and there’s no better candidate than yourself, so you do it. Duty involves going about your work without complaint. It means knowing your role and carrying it out well. And duty is remaining consistent, day after day, year after year, for a lifetime.

Being Queen was not without difficulties, but Elizabeth’s mantra was famously, “Never complain, never explain.” She never allowed her personal feelings to get in the way of the job. Elizabeth learned from her father’s example. He was not prepared for the role of king but had to assume it when his brother quit. Her duty came from the depth of character learned at a young age.

In Queen Elizabeth II the world had a living witness of a woman who strove to maintain high character. Character is about duty and following through on a commitment.

A poignant scene took place after the funeral at the internment. Just before the Queen’s coffin was lowered into the crypt, the crown, orb and scepter were removed from her coffin and placed on the church’s altar. But not the wooden Wand of Office representing her authority. The Lord Chamberlin broke it and placed the two pieces on the coffin. Her earthly reign was over. She went into the ground as a commoner.

All who are truly God’s servants today are preparing for a spiritual crown of life. If we continue to live a life of service, commitment and duty with His help, when we go into the ground we can be assured that a crown and a throne will await us at the resurrection! **BT**

The Now-Glorious Stone Once Rejected

The upcoming coronation of King Charles III should remind us of a far greater and more glorious coronation and reign—one in which we could play a glorious part!

by Robin Webber

It won't be long until the world beholds the coronation of Charles III as monarch of the United Kingdom. King Charles has known since he was a lad that his destiny would bring him to this moment. His is a bloodline of kings that weaves far back into the ancient past. There will be no surprise when a crown is lowered on his head accompanied by global recognition and affirmation.

But Scripture tells a story about another royal figure who went largely unrecognized in His role by those with whom He came into contact. Hundreds of years before His coming He was heralded as “the stone which the builders rejected” that would yet “become the chief cornerstone” by “the LORD’s doing” (Psalm 118:22-23; quoted in Matthew 21:42).

This humanly rejected individual is the same One who invites us with the words “Follow Me” (Matthew 10:38). In addition, as we respond to God’s calling and will, we always need reminding that God’s thoughts and ways are far above our natural human ways (Isaiah 55:8).

“We did not esteem Him”

The prophet Isaiah created a portrait of this rejected stone as One who was “despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him” (Isaiah 53:3-4). His ministry would be ridiculed by demeaning statements like, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” (John 1:46).

Nonetheless, He was never deterred from the mission for which He was born. He spoke of good news—that the Kingdom of God is at hand, saying we must repent and believe the gospel to be part of that Kingdom (Mark 1:14-15). His arrival with this announcement was a staggering interruption in human history. Nothing would ever be the same! Something incredible was now in motion, and it was time for people to get a mind and heart fit for this Kingdom!

His inaugural message spoke of the reign of God, His sovereignty over mind, heart and will in human lives and

ultimately over the entire earth. He urged hearers, “Come to Me” and “Follow Me,” unwavering in His confidence in the love of His Heavenly Father not only for Himself but for those who would heed His invitation.

“Are You a King then?”

In His final days on earth the Roman governor Pontius Pilate, having heard claims about statements He’d made, asked Him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” (John 18:33). He responded that His Kingdom was not of this present world (verse 36). This perplexed the Roman, so he doubled down by again asking, “Are You a king then?” The Nazarene responded: “You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth” (verse 37).

Both the pagan Roman world and His own countrymen rejected the Man from Galilee. He who had never harmed another human being but instead nurtured people, healed them and in some cases resurrected them to life, would have His own existence snuffed out as “the stone which the builders rejected.”

As Dorothy Sayers would share in her 1938 essay “The Greatest Drama Ever Staged,” this Man “had ‘a daily beauty in his life that made us ugly,’ and officialdom felt that the established order of things would be more secure without Him. So they did away with God in the name of peace and quietness.”

What were His words and deeds that would cause such rejection?

- He had proclaimed that we are to not only “love your neighbor,” but to “love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you” (Matthew 5:43).

- He had proclaimed just before this, “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God” (Matthew 5:9).

- He proclaimed: “Judge not, that you be not judged. For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged;



group of 10 kings arising out of the succession of gentile empires] the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold—the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure” (verses 44-45).

It is this same now-exalted One—the Glorious Stone formerly rejected—who said on the night before He died to those who heeded the call of “Follow Me” that “I go to prepare a place for you . . . [and] I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also” (John 14:2-3).

Scripture clearly states that He is coming back to earth. He will stand on the Mount of Olives just outside Jerusalem, returning to the spot from

where He ascended (Zechariah 14:3-4; Acts 1:10-12). Jesus Christ is not going to be handing out clouds, harps and sheet music for heavenly choral groups as rewards to His faith-

The prophet Daniel depicts this “rejected stone” in his interpretation of King Nebuchadnezzar’s dream in Daniel 2:44-45. A divine stone “cut . . . without hands” will destroy human kingdoms and fill the entire earth.

and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you” (Matthew 7:1-2).

- He also proclaimed, “Whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many” (Matthew 20:27-28).

For such teachings, and urging His followers to do the same, He was tortured. This included a crown of thorns being jammed down onto His skull in mockery. And then He was brutally crucified, being nailed alive to a beam of wood (Matthew 27:27-31).

But was this the end of the story?

Every knee shall bow to Him

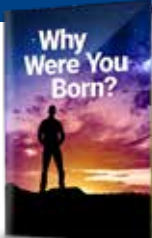
The Supreme Court of Heaven, whose Chief Justice is God the Father, powerfully overruled the lower courts and judges of earth. He raised Jesus from the dead and “has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow . . . and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Philippians 2:9-11).

This “rejected stone” appears in the prophetic dream of Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 2, which Daniel interpreted, saying: “And in the days of these kings [a final

ful followers, but He is going to establish a Kingdom and will grant them everlasting dominion in it (Daniel 7:27). Faithful disciples down through the ages who have accepted His call to live as He lived will become kings and priests to God and “shall reign on the earth” (Revelation 5:10; 20:4-6).

And like our Savior and Lord of our life who led the way before us, before we bear a crown we, too, must bear a cross. As Jesus stated: “If anyone desires to come after Me, let Him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it” (Matthew 16:24-25).

Until next time, let us pray, “Your Kingdom come, Your will be done on earth”—in our lives now—“as it is in heaven.” **BT**



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Comments on *Beyond Today* magazine and television

“The Divided States of America” issue was outstanding! Please pass along my appreciation to the writers for all their work, including the editorial, “A House Divided Against Itself Cannot Stand.” How timely, given the outcome of the recent election. Again, thanks for all your editorial endeavors.

From the Internet

I wanted to tell you “thank you!” for the issue on “The New Sexual Revolution,” but never got around to it. But then I saw in a later issue that some people were upset over it, so I wanted to make sure I told you “thank you”—for speaking the truth, not wavering and not compromising.

Too many churches are becoming more tolerant to fit in. Thank you for sticking up for God’s Word and His principles no matter what. It was such a great issue. I stopped doing holidays about 10 years ago and love your truth about holidays, the trinity, rapture and hell. My eyes have been opened to the truth through your literature and videos. The only thing I miss is celebrating the feasts and being with like-minded believers. The closest UCG congregation is an hour and a half away. But thank you for the magazine and all your resources. I appreciate you all very much.

From the Internet

Your magazine is very informative, and I enjoy reading your articles and am hopeful for our future. Thank you so much, and God bless you always.

From the Internet

I have just been watching your *Beyond Today* TV episode where your Bible study aid *The New Covenant: Does It Abolish God’s Law?* is offered. I found the teaching to be a very clear explanation regarding what was actually nailed to the cross and the meaning of the written sign. Please can you send me a copy of this study aid, as it will be a physical confirmation of what I have now heard and understood? Thank you for your welcome clear teachings.

Viewer in the United Kingdom

Reader interested in finding local congregation

I have not been to church in years but I stumbled on your website in researching the Bible and find your beliefs very close to mine. I would be interested in attending if I can find something fairly close by. Can you possibly help me with a location?

Reader in Oregon

We’re glad to hear that! You can find all of our congregations listed at ucg.org/congregations. Feel free to reach out to the pastor of the one closest to you as well.

Reader comment about the seventh-day Sabbath

I have enjoyed your magazine as a truthful, God-inspired Bible study for many years. My struggle has been your insistence that the Sabbath is any one particular day of the week. Your recent article in the Nov.-Dec. 2022 issue, page 28, refers to sunset Friday to sunset Saturday as the Sabbath. You then reference Exodus and Mark as proof. They explicitly say Sabbath, but nowhere in the Bible are the words “Saturday” through “Sunday” used.

This is your manmade decision to call Saturday the Sabbath. God worked for six days and rested on the seventh. He didn’t say which day He started. Regardless of one’s belief here, my point is simple; we cannot be 100 percent certain what day is truly the seventh day of the week. The seventh day is simply a marker for us, one day out of seven should be our rest.

From the Internet

We appreciate your interest in our magazine and welcome this opportunity to respond. You asked about our statement that the Sabbath is to be observed from sunset Friday to sunset Saturday and that you don’t feel we can be 100 percent certain what day is truly the seventh day of the week.

The Bible is clear that God commanded the seventh day be observed as the Sabbath (Exodus 20:10). If you look in almost any dictionary, encyclopedia or calendar it will show that Saturday is the seventh day of the week.

Although man has modified calendars through the centuries and each culture has its own names for each day, the seven-day weekly cycle has remained intact throughout history. The days of the week have always remained in their proper order, with the day we call Sunday as the first day of the week and the day we call Saturday as the seventh. Time has not been lost in this regard.

Jesus repeatedly confirmed that the day the Jews observed as the Sabbath in His day was indeed the weekly Sabbath day. This was the same day for all, not an individually chosen one. And since then, the Jewish people have preserved the same seventh day, which corresponds to Friday sunset to Saturday sunset on today’s calendars.

Moreover, mainstream Christian churches, though rejecting the seventh-day Sabbath command, indirectly confirm when that day is by maintaining their tradition of worshiping on Sunday, which they openly acknowledge to be the first day of the week.

It is not up to us to decide which day is holy time. We cannot make anything holy—only God can. And He already did that at creation by resting on the seventh day and sanctifying it, making it holy (Genesis 2:1-3). He then told His people to remember the seventh day (not just any day, but following the same cycle), and to keep it holy as one of His Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:8-10).

*For more information on this important subject, readers may be interested in reading our free study guide *Sunset to Sunset: God’s Sabbath Rest*, which you can download or request at ucg.org/booklets.*

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I really enjoy *Beyond Today* magazine. It gives a good understanding of the Bible and highlights information not found elsewhere. I highly recommend this magazine to all.

—KT, Facebook fan



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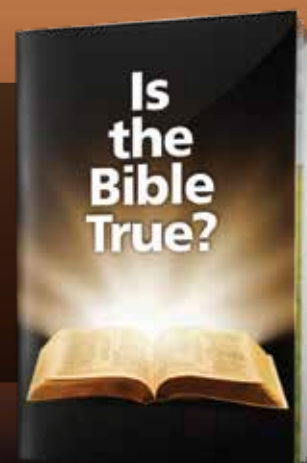
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