

June 13, 2023

Dear Brethren and Friends,

Last month, on the 6th May 2023, King Charles the Third was crowned in Westminster Abbey in London as King of the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland and the 14 other Commonwealth realms. His mother, Queen Elizabeth the Second, was coronated on 2nd June 1953, some 70 years ago and so it was an elaborate and archaic ritual not seen in Britain since 1953.

In his first spoken part of the ceremony, Charles said that he had come to "serve, not to be served" and to follow the example of the "King of kings."

The religious service was carried out by the Archbishop of Canterbury and other senior figures in the Church of England. At the climax of the ceremony, the Archbishop placed St Edward's Crown on Charles's head—a solid gold crown, dating from 1661. This is the centrepiece of the Crown Jewels at the Tower of London, and is only worn by the monarch at the moment of coronation itself (not least because it weighs a hefty 2.23kg—almost 5lbs). Unlike royal weddings, the coronation is a state occasion—the government pays for it, and ultimately decides the guest list.

For the past 900 years the coronation has been held in Westminster Abbey—William the Conqueror was the first monarch to be crowned there, and Charles was the 40th.

Among the historic items used was the Stone of Destiny. The stone, also known as the Stone of Scone, was transported from its usual home in Edinburgh Castle to London at the end of last month. We discussed the Stone of Scone in detail in several Q&As and also in our Current Events.

The Gold State Coach, which is covered in gold leaf and carved decorations, was first used by King George III to travel to the State Opening of Parliament in 1762.

The sheer logistics in preparation for and leading to the coronation service had to be admired. After the coronation service, the BBC reported that "At the head of the procession—about a mile in front—was Brigade Major Lieutenant Colonel James Shaw riding Sovereign's Shadow. He led more than 4,000 members of the armed forces from the UK and across the Commonwealth, 19 bands and flag-bearers, formed into eight groups. It was the largest procession in the UK for 70 years."

As members of the true Church of God, we realise and understand that there were a number of elements of the service that were plainly unbiblical, including some taking the eucharist which is a counterfeit of the Passover service. Praying to the Trinity, and references to the cross and other matters were made which were not in accordance with true Biblical understanding. In fact, the entire service appeared to be Catholic to the core and it was not the kind of service which would have been pleasing to God.

Nevertheless, all of this pageantry might have been impressive to many; especially to those who are not members of the Church of God. However, there is a future event that will dwarf all of what transpired at this coronation.

Those in the Church have long been looking forward to the return of Jesus Christ to this earth when the havoc, chaos and confusion that is reflected in society worldwide today, will be eliminated. From all the current signs that there are in the world, we surely cannot be far from the time of the Great Tribulation and the Day of the Lord, spanning 3½ years of calamity and destruction which

will pre-date Christ's return. (In this regard, please ask for our new free booklet, titled, "*The Rise and Fall of Germany and Europe.*") We see prophecy coming to pass in the world before our eyes and Daniel 12:1 is very specific about the time just ahead of us: "At that time Michael shall stand up, The great prince who stands *watch* over the sons of your people; And there shall be a time of trouble, Such as never was since there was a nation, *Even* to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, Every one who is found written in the book."

However, there are warnings for us. We are admonished in 2 Peter 3:3-4 as follows: "...knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, and saying, 'Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of creation.'" We are not to fall asleep spiritually at this critical time but to put on the whole armor of God (see Ephesians 6) and "above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one" (verse 16). We must stand strong!

Without question, Satan will be pursuing the begotten members of the God Family as we read in 1 Peter 5:8: "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour."

We are to look forward to Christ's return and to Him setting up the Government of God on the earth which is a time that we will be involved with. We read about this in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17: "For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord."

King Charles the Third said that he was to "serve, not to be served" and to follow the example of the "King of kings." He will presumably do the best he can as a human being, but the arrival of Jesus Christ at His Second Coming will see Him serve in a godly way, not just for a few years, but for eternity, as indeed we will if we remain faithful to the end of our days (compare Matthew 24:13).

In this world of great uncertainty, and as it has become darker and more chaotic, we can be certain about the veracity of God's Word which shows that better times are ahead for all of God's people, and for all of humanity.

Let us all take heart, fully appreciate our calling, stay close to God and look forward to a much better world that is ahead of us. And when Jesus does return, we will be with Him to serve all of humanity.

With Christian love,



Brian Gale (United Kingdom)