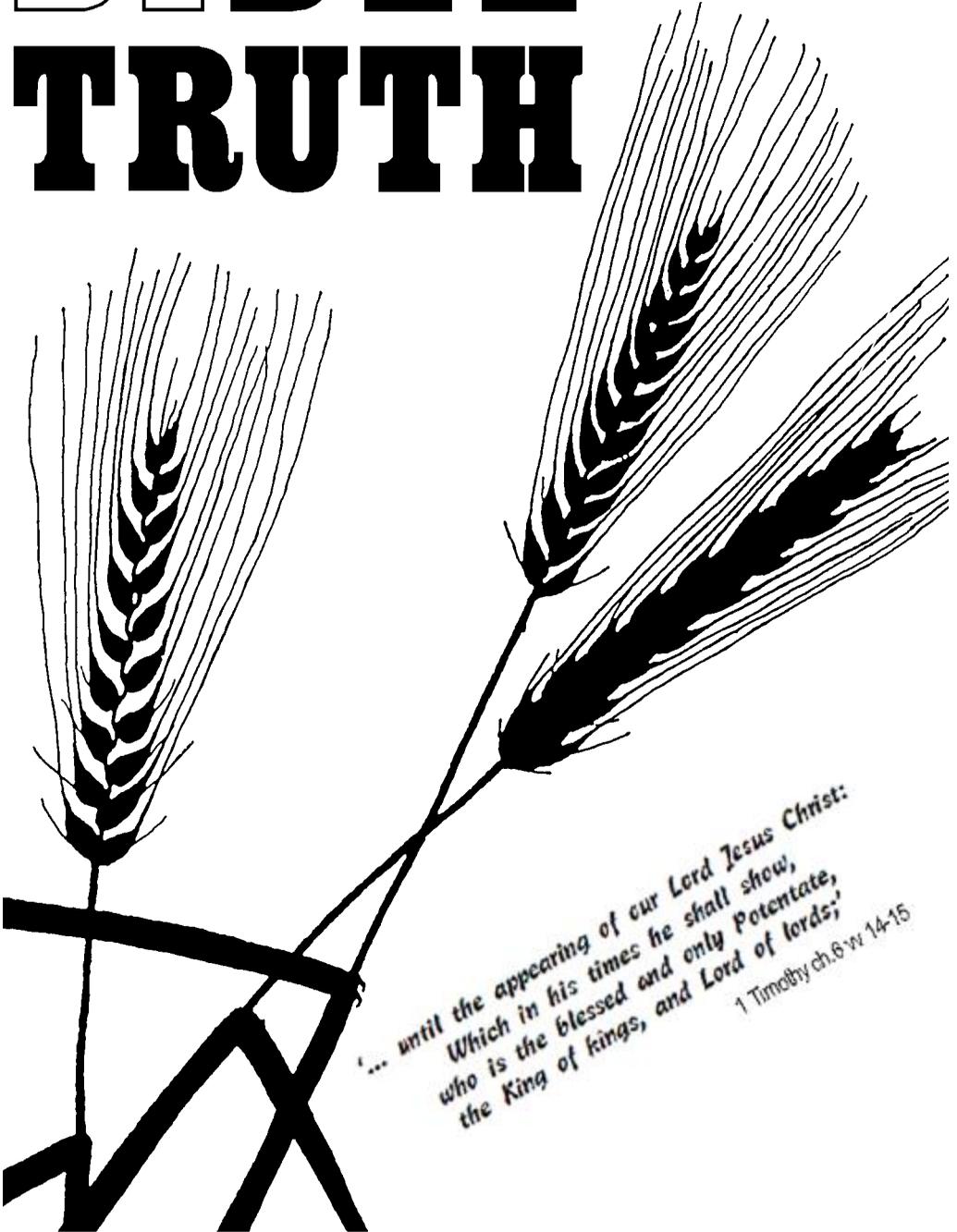
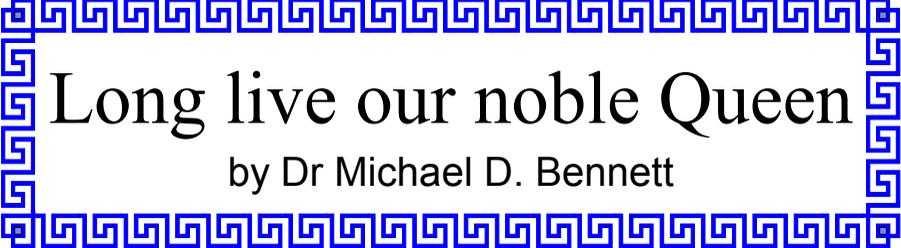


BIBLE TRUTH

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*... until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ:
Which in his times he shall show,
who is the blessed and only Potentate,
the King of kings, and Lord of lords;
1 Timothy ch.6-w 14-15*



Long live our noble Queen

by Dr Michael D. Bennett

1. Introduction

2012 sees the celebration of the Diamond Jubilee of the reign of Queen Elizabeth II. While this will be the subject of thanksgiving for all true subjects, it will have a special perspective for British Israelite Christians who understand her ancestry from King David, recognise the throne on which she reigns as the continuing Throne of David, and know the real identity of her true British (Covenant People) subjects as Israelites.

The English word Jubilee is of Hebrew origin, and comes from the Hebrew word 'yobel', meaning 'time of shouting'. The Bible explains about jubilees and their proper celebration. While it has a lot to say about the significance of periods of 50 years and 70 years in the Divine time scheme of numbering of days, weeks, months and years, it has nothing of similar import to reveal or require about the period of 60 years. Indeed, this period is not mentioned in the Divine programme, but is a recent human invention, as noted below. Nevertheless, the Diamond Jubilee merits our attention because of its historical rarity, and as an opportunity to reflect on the identity of our monarchy. We are wise to remember the great principles and promises governing long life and the lengthening of day for monarchs and subjects alike in Israel. It is timely to reaffirm the Lord Jesus Christ as rightful heir to David's throne, soon to return and reign on earth as everlasting 'KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS'.

A Diamond Jubilee is a celebration held to mark the 60th anniversary in the case of a person (e.g. wedding anniversary, length of time a monarch has reigned) or a 75th anniversary in the case of an event. Traditionally, the Diamond Jubilee or anniversary of a person was also the 75th anniversary, but this all changed with the Diamond Jubilee of the British Queen Victoria's reign.

Queen Victoria marked the fiftieth anniversary (Golden Jubilee) of her accession on 20 June 1887 (a true $7 \times 7 + 1$ years biblical jubilee). It was celebrated with a splendid banquet to which 50 kings and princes were invited. The next day she participated in a great procession and attended a service of thanksgiving in Westminster Abbey.

It was decided to celebrate the 60th anniversary of her accession in 1897 as her 'Diamond Jubilee'. The prime ministers of all the self-governing dominions were invited, and her procession through London paused for an open air service of thanksgiving outside St Paul's Cathedral, throughout which Victoria sat in her open carriage. There was a great outpouring of affection for their long-lived monarch. The Diamond Jubilee has been held on the 60th anniversary ever since. So this innovation (now followed world-wide) originates from the decision by the British Government (sanctioned by the reigning occupant of the Throne of David).

2. Origins of Britain's National Anthem

'God Save The King' was a patriotic song first publicly performed in London in 1745 (in the reign of King George II) which became known as the British National Anthem at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Surprisingly, for such a famous song, both the words and the tune are anonymous, and may date back to the seventeenth century.

It could be a further surprise to many to learn that the song first came to public notice, not by its use at church or state occasions, but by its performance at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane. The Official website of The British Monarchy states,

'In September 1745 the "Young Pretender" to the British Throne, Prince Charles Edward Stuart, defeated the army of King George II at Prestopans near Edinburgh.

In a fit of patriotic fervour after the news from Prestopans had reached London the leader of the band at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane arranged "God Save the King" for performance after a play. It was a tremendous success and was repeated nightly.

This practice soon spread to other theatres and the custom of greeting monarchs with the song as he or she entered a place of public entertainment was thus established*.

There is no authorised version of the National Anthem as the words are a matter of tradition. Additional verses have been added down the years** but these are rarely used.

The words used today are those sung in 1745, substituting “Queen” for “King” where appropriate. On official occasions, only the first verse is usually sung.

**God save our gracious Queen!
Long live our noble Queen!
God save the Queen!
Send her victorious,
Happy and glorious,
Long to reign over us,
God save the Queen.**

**Thy choicest gifts in store
On her be pleased to pour,
Long may she reign.
May she defend our laws,
And ever give us cause,
To sing with heart and voice,
God save the Queen.**

In total around 140 composers, including Beethoven, Haydn and Brahms have used the tune in their compositions’.

* Although older readers will recall, younger readers may also be surprised to know that until quite recently, public entertainment in theatres and cinemas ended by playing the National Anthem which was sung by all present standing as a mark of respect.

** Many of our readers will know and appreciate singing the following additional words which ask God for continued protection and deliverance for our monarch and us all.

**O Lord our God arise;
Scatter her enemies,
And make them fall,
Confound their politics,
Frustrate their knavish tricks,
On thee our hope we fix,
God save us all!**

3. 'God save the king' in the Bible

While the full words of the song are anonymous, the origin of the words in its first line is quite certain, and like many other things ingrained at the centre of British public life, come from the *King James Authorised Version* of the Bible.

They occur first in connection with the Coronation of King Saul, after Israel rejected God as their King and demanded a visible human monarch instead.

'... And all the people shouted, and said, **God save the king.** Then Samuel told the people the manner of the kingdom, and wrote it in a book, and laid it up before the LORD.'

1 Samuel ch.10 vv 24-25

Further examination shows that these words occur in the Bible several times. On each occasion they are specifically concerned with the monarch in Israel, and latterly with the line and throne of King David in troubled times, as when David's son Absalom tried to depose his father, provoking civil war and intrigue.

'And it came to pass, when Hushai the Archite, David's friend, was come unto Absalom, that Hushai said unto Absalom, God save the king, God save the king.'

2 Samuel ch.16 v.16

The same words were used at the coronation of the boy king Joash. The royal succession has often hung by a thread, as when only one little prince was saved alive at the time that Queen Athaliah 'destroyed all the seed royal of the house of Judah' (2 Chronicles ch.22 v.10). She reigned while he was hidden in the House of God for six years, until he was crowned and she was executed.

'And he brought forth the king's son, and put the crown upon him, and gave him the testimony; and they made him king, and anointed him; and they clapped their hands, and said, God save the king.'

2 Kings ch. 11 v. 12

The coronation of Joash (aged 7) is also described with added details in the Second Book of Chronicles where the same words 'God save the king' are included.

'Then they brought out the king's son, and put upon him the crown, and gave him the testimony, and made him king. And Jehoiada and his sons anointed him and said, God save the king.'

2 Chronicles ch. 23 v. 11

Close examination of the *King James Authorized Version* shows that on each occasion the translators include a marginal note to the effect that 'God save the king' is given as 'Let the king live' in the original Hebrew. This was probably known to the anonymous author of our National Anthem. If so, it would explain the prayer for long life in the second line which immediately follows that for salvation in the first line - 'God save our gracious Queen, Long live our noble Queen'. A similar conjunction of these thoughts occurs in the second verse - 'Long may she reign ... God save the Queen'.

This year, 2012, sees the Diamond Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. She came to the throne on 6th February 1952, while on a visit to Kenya, following the sudden death of her father King George VI. She flew home to be received as monarch by her government and people led by the then Prime Minister Sir Winston Churchill.

4. 'Long live our noble Queen!'

God has certainly been graciously pleased to answer that prayer for Queen Elizabeth II. Born on 21 April 1926 she was a young woman (aged 25) when she ascended the throne. Sixty years later, aged 85, she continues to enjoy good health and serves as monarch by fulfilling an arduous programme of official engagements. We can thank God for her stamina and standards.

She initially had little prospect of succeeding to the throne. However her destiny became clear when her uncle Edward VIII abdicated to marry the American divorcee Wallace Simpson. Her father became King George VI, and she became heir. Her mother, Queen Elizabeth was a pillar of strength with firm views on morality. Our Queen has followed them, setting an excellent example of family life for her people which others have fallen short of.

Our Queen has honoured her parents' beliefs and behaviour, and has inherited the blessing promised to those who obey the fifth commandment.

'Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.'

Exodus ch.20 v.12

'Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.'

Ephesians ch.6 vv 2-3

Several other members of our royal family have similarly been blessed in recent years. Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother also enjoyed good health and long life. When she died on 30 March 2002, aged 101, her surviving daughter Queen Elizabeth was at her bedside. At the time of her death she was the longest lived member of the royal family in British history. This record was broken on 24 July 2003 by her last surviving sister-in-law Princess Alice, Duchess of Gloucester who died aged 102 on 29 October 2004.

Our present Queen's long reign bears strong comparison with that of Queen Victoria. Indeed, Queen Elizabeth's Diamond Jubilee follows that of Britain's last female monarch Queen Victoria (her great, great grandmother) whose long reign broke several records. At birth Victoria was fifth in line of succession, and like Queen Elizabeth, she seemed unlikely to become monarch. However, she ascended the throne (aged 18) in 1837. Her reign of 63 years, seven months and two days, which is longer than that of any other British monarch and the longest of any female monarch in history is now known as the Victorian era.

On 23 September 1896 Victoria surpassed her grandfather George III as the longest reigning monarch in English, Scottish and British history. The Queen requested that any special celebration be delayed until 1897 to coincide with her Diamond Jubilee, which was made a festival of the British Empire at the suggestion of the colonial secretary Joseph Chamberlain.

5. David's throne and length of days

There are special links between the throne of David and long life in the Bible. God appeared to King Solomon at the outset of his reign and asked him in a dream: 'Ask what I shall give thee?' Solomon asked for wisdom to judge God's people righteously. This pleased the Lord who granted his request, and also added wealth, honour and lengthened days.

'... the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night: and God said, Ask what I shall give thee. ... And Solomon said, ... Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad ... And the speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing. ... And God said unto him ... Behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart ... And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked,

both riches, and honour; ... And if thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days.'

1 Kings ch.3 vv 5-6 & 9-13

A second remarkable instance of the prolonging of the days of a monarch ruling on David's throne concerns King Hezekiah and the prophet Isaiah. King Hezekiah '... did that which was right in the sight of the LORD' (2 Kings ch.18 v.3), but he became ill and Isaiah was sent to tell him to put his affairs in order. However, Hezekiah threw himself on God's mercy with the result that God added fifteen years to his life, and miraculously prolonged the day of His promise.

'In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And Isaiah the prophet ... said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Set thine house in order: for thou shalt die, and not live. Then Hezekiah ... prayed unto the LORD, And said, Remember now, O LORD, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore. Then came the word of the LORD to Isaiah, saying, Go, and say to Hezekiah, Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will add unto thy days fifteen years. ... And this shall be a sign unto thee from the LORD, that the LORD will do this thing that he hath spoken; Behold, I will bring again the shadow of the degrees, which is gone down in the sun dial of Ahaz, ten degrees backward. So the sun returned ten degrees, by which degrees it was gone down.'

Isaiah ch.38 vv 1-8

This amazing story concerning the monarch's reign on the Throne of David shows to a remarkable degree how God is in complete control of time, determining both the length of all our individual lives, and the duration of each individual day.

The greatest example of the prolonging of the days for one born to reign on the Throne of David concerns the Lord Jesus Christ of whom the angel Gabriel said: '... Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David;' (Luke ch.1 v.32). However, He did not ascend His earthly throne at His first coming. Instead, in obedience to His Father, He was crucified on Calvary to redeem His people from their sins. No-one honoured His Father more than Jesus Christ, and His Father testified His pleasure in Him: '... This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; ...' (Matthew ch.17 v.5). So His life was

extended without limit when He rose from the dead ‘... after the power of an endless life’ (Hebrews ch.7 v.16).

‘Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.’

Isaiah ch.53 v.10

This prolongation guarantees fulfilment of the promise of His unending reign on David’s throne.

‘... the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.’

Luke ch.1 vv 32-33

King David clearly prayed for life and he tells of his prophetic faith of receiving everlasting life. For example,

‘The king shall joy in thy strength, O LORD; and in thy salvation how greatly shall he rejoice! Thou hast given him his heart’s desire, ... thou settest a crown of pure gold on his head. He asked life of thee, and thou gavest it him, even length of days for ever and ever. His glory is great in thy salvation: honour and majesty hast thou laid upon him’.

Psalms 21 vv 1-5

Interestingly, in the following Psalm of David, his prayer comes from ‘the end of the earth’ – Ultima Thule – the name given to the far coasts of Europe including these British Isles.

‘Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer. From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed ... I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever ... Thou wilt prolong the king’s life: and his years as many generations [margin: ‘Thou shalt add days to the days of the king’.] He shall abide before God for ever...’

Psalms 61 vv 1-2, 4 & 6-7

King Solomon (who authored most of Proverbs) testified of his personal experience in this regard, and stated the principle which can operate in the lives of all others who succeed him, and seek to rule in life according to God’s laws.

‘Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding ... She is more precious than rubies ... Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honour.’

Proverbs ch.3 vv 13, 15-16

The promise of life was given to all God's people by Israel's prophet ruler Moses, as a choice depending on their response to God's word and law.

'But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it. See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; ... I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: That thou mayest love the LORD thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob, to give them.'

Deuteronomy ch.30 vv 14-15 &19-20

6. 'Choicest gifts' – Diamonds and the throne

It was noted above, how because Solomon asked for wisdom to rule righteously, God granted him great honour and riches also. The thought is paralleled in the National Anthem where the second verse begins 'Thy choicest gifts in store, On her be pleased to pour'.

Throughout their history God has been pleased to grant this people and our monarchs with similar blessings. Our Queen is recognised as one of the most wealthy people on earth today, and the royal collections are foremost among the world's great assemblages of precious things men value most, such as: paintings and drawings, gold and silver vessels, and jewellery and gems.

This subject could fill many articles, but as it is provoked by a Diamond Jubilee celebration, we will focus on remarkable blessings concerning the world's greatest diamonds in relation to our throne and monarch. The topic is not short of superlatives, and examples which relate to the Crown Jewels used in the Coronation services of our monarchs. One example occurred during the reign of Queen Victoria, under whom the empire reached a pinnacle of power, and who ascribed its pre-eminence to 'the book' meaning the Bible.

- a. **The Koh-i-Noor diamond** was for centuries the largest known diamond in the world (just over 186 carats). Koh-i-Noor means 'Mountain of light' in Persian. A Hindu text relating to the first authenticated appearance of the diamond in 1306 stated, 'He who owns this diamond will own the world, but will know all its misfortunes. Only God, or a woman can wear it with impunity'.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh the crowned ruler of Punjab willed the Koh-i-Noor to the Jagannath Temple in Orissa from his deathbed in 1839. On 29th March 1849 the Punjab was formally proclaimed to be part of the British Empire. One of the terms of the Treaty of Lahore, the legal agreement formalising this, was as follows.

‘The gem called the Koh-i-Noor ... shall be surrendered by the Maharajah of Lahore to the Queen of England.’

The stone was handed over to the Queen on 3 July 1850, and the British public were given a first chance to see it when the Great Exhibition was staged in Hyde Park (London) in 1851.

Disappointment at the appearance of the stone was not uncommon. During 1852, in Amsterdam under the personal supervision of Victoria’s consort, Prince Albert, the diamond was cut to its current 105.6 carats to increase its brilliance. The stone became part of the British Crown Jewels when Queen Victoria was proclaimed Empress of India in 1877. It was mounted in a brooch which Queen Victoria often wore, and was kept at Windsor Castle rather than with the rest of the crown jewels at the Tower of London.

After Queen Victoria’s death it was set in Queen Alexandra’s brand-new diamond crown, with which she was crowned at the coronation of her husband, King Edward VII. Queen Alexandra was the first Queen Consort to use the diamond in her crown, followed by Queen Mary and then Queen Elizabeth (wife of King George VI).

- b. **The Cullinan diamond** is the largest rough gem-quality diamond ever found, at over 3,106 carats. Discovered at the Premier Diamond Mining Company in South Africa in January 1905 it was named after the mine’s owner Sir Thomas Cullinan. The stone was bought by the Transvaal government and presented to King Edward VII on his birthday. It was cut into three large parts by Asscher Brothers of Amsterdam, and eventually into 9 large gem-quality stones and a number of smaller fragments.

The largest polished gem from the stone is named Cullinan I or the Great Star of Africa, and at 530.4 carats was the largest polished diamond in the world until the 1985 discovery of the

Golden Jubilee diamond (545.67 carats), also from the Premier mine. The second largest gem from the Cullinan stone, Cullinan II or the Lesser Star of Africa, at 317.4 carats, is the fourth largest polished diamond in the world. Both gems are in the Crown Jewels of the United Kingdom.

Cullinan I (whose value is estimated at over £200 million) is now mounted in the head of the sceptre with the cross. This sceptre was made in 1661, but in 1910 it was redesigned to incorporate the Cullinan I. During the coronation the monarch bears the sceptre with the cross in the right hand, when he or she is crowned with St Edward's Crown (which has the same 12 stones on its circlet band as the high priest's breastplate).

c. **Royal Collection summer exhibition of diamonds.**

In 2012 Buckingham Palace is to house a dazzling exhibition of diamonds to mark the Queen's 60 years on the throne[†]. In a tribute to the monarch's diamond jubilee, the Royal Collection is putting on a celebration of the precious gemstone, charting its association with British monarchs during the last 200 years.

[†] *Diamonds: A Jubilee Celebration* — The Summer Opening of Buckingham Palace August and September 2012.

'The exhibition, which will be the focal point of the Palace's 2012 summer opening, will include an unprecedented display of some of the sovereign's personal jewels' – those inherited by Her Majesty or acquired during her reign. These will include the impressive necklace and earrings worn by the Queen at her coronation ceremony in Westminster Abbey in 1953. Amid the sparkling ice gems will be the monarch's Williamson brooch, which features a rare pink diamond – said to be the finest in existence.

Queen Victoria's recognisable miniature personal crown, which measures just 9 cm by 10 cm but contains nearly 1,200 diamonds, will also be on view.

'Diamond, the hardest natural material known, carries associations of endurance and longevity. These qualities, allied to the purity, magnificence and value of the stones, have for centuries led rulers to deploy diamonds in regalia, jewellery and precious objects. Individual diamonds have achieved great renown, passing down the generations and between enemies or allies as potent symbols of sovereignty and as precious gifts.'

‘A spectacular exhibition at Buckingham Palace will show the many ways in which diamonds have been used by British monarchs over the last 200 years. The exhibition will reveal how many of these extraordinary stones have undergone a number of transformations, having been re-cut or incorporated into new settings during their fascinating history.’

7. Priceless Bible stones

Viewing the Crown Jewels at The Tower of London, or visiting this summer exhibition at Buckingham Palace offers amazing spectacles of outstanding value. However, the Bible exceeds every purely human superlative. A diamond was listed as the third stone in the second row of gems in the breastplate of the high priest of Israel, first worn by Moses’ brother Aaron.

‘And the second row shall be an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond.’

Exodus ch.28 v.18

Inscribed with the name of one of the tribes of Israel (Exodus ch.39 v.14). Given its unique history and rarity, the value of this unique artefact and diamond would doubtless transcend that of all others, were it to come up for sale today.

Diamond is noted as the hardest material in nature. It is four times harder than corundum (ruby), and so it can scratch all other natural materials without damage to itself. However, the Bible reveals the existence of another stone, well able to grind all other earthly kingdoms to powder, when the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed (Daniel ch.2). This vision speaks of Christ’s soon coming earthly kingdom when He will return to rule Israel on David’s throne, and also to govern all the nations with a rod (sceptre) of iron (Revelation ch.19 v.15).

‘The crown of pride, the drunkards of Ephraim, shall be trodden under feet ... In that day shall the LORD of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of his people, ... Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste. ... And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand’

Isaiah ch.28 vv 3, 5, 16 & 18

8. Thanksgiving and prayer

In 2012 we can thank God for keeping His Covenant with David concerning an enduring throne in our generation, and we rejoice that He has blessed us with such a gracious monarch who has dedicated her life in selfless service to her people for so many years.

In this capacity she leads the nation in many ways and places which recently included: taking the salute at the trooping of the colour, presiding over the State Opening of Parliament, leading the Remembrance Sunday Service at the Cenotaph in London, and attending the Festival of Remembrance organised by the Royal British Legion (of which she is Patron) at the Royal Albert Hall, and addressing her people at Christmas. We are thankful that so many of her duties do reflect our Christian heritage and her faith.

Her 2012 Christmas broadcast included a clear scriptural statement concerning the Lordship of Christ, and her Christian faith, as she concluded,

‘... as we all know, the world is going through difficult times. All this will affect our celebration of this great Christian festival.

Finding hope in adversity is one of the themes of Christmas. Jesus was born into a world full of fear. The angels came to frightened shepherds with hope in their voice: “Fear not”, they urged, “we bring you tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born in the city of David a Saviour who is Christ the Lord”.

Although we are capable of great acts of kindness, history teaches us that we sometimes need saving from ourselves – from our recklessness or our greed. God sent into the world an unique person – neither a philosopher nor a general (important though they are) - but a Saviour, with the power to forgive’.

On the eve of her Diamond Jubilee the Queen, who was staying at Sandringham, led the Royal Family out in the snow for a morning service at West Newton Church on the estate on Sunday 5th February. Later they visited the Sunday school in the village hall. The Queen issued a message of thanks to the public on Monday morning on the 60th anniversary of her accession to the throne. In a statement from Buckingham Palace, the 86-year-old monarch promised to dedicate herself anew to the service of the country.

The following prayer, written at the Queen's direction by the Chapter of St Paul's Cathedral for Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee, will be used in the Jubilee Thanksgiving service at St Paul's Cathedral on Tuesday 6th June 2012.

*God of time and eternity,
Whose Son reigns as servant, not master,
We give you thanks and praise
that you have blessed this Nation, the Realms and Territories
with ELIZABETH, our beloved and glorious Queen
in this year of Jubilee,
grant her your gifts of love, joy and peace
as she continues in faithful obedience to you, her Lord and God
and in devoted service to her lands and peoples,
and those of the Commonwealth,
now and all the days of her life,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Amen.