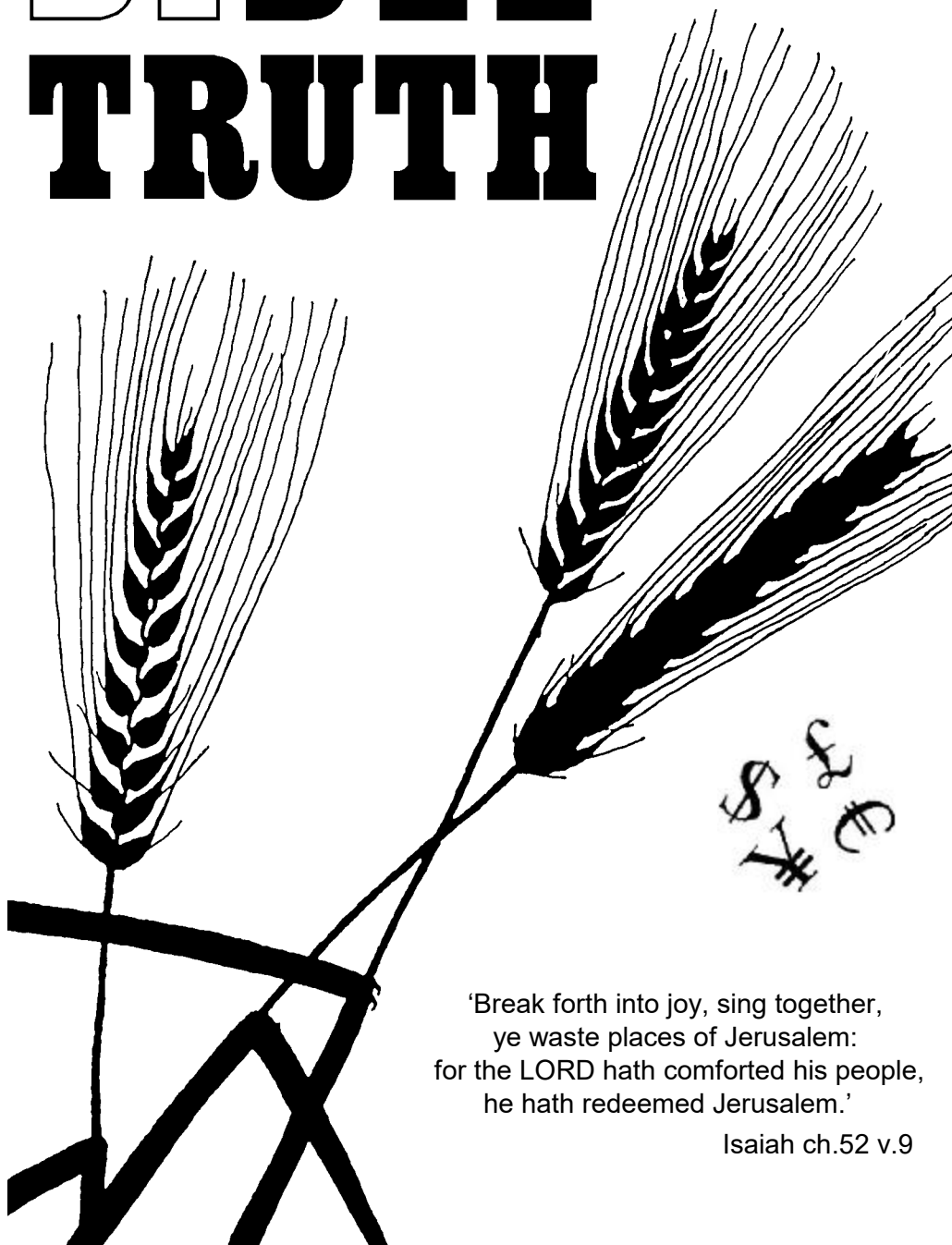


# BIBLE TRUTH

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'Break forth into joy, sing together,  
ye waste places of Jerusalem:  
for the LORD hath comforted his people,  
he hath redeemed Jerusalem.'

Isaiah ch.52 v.9

# *Is the Throne Doomed?*

*by Paul Boyd-Lee*



A 'doom' once meant a statute, law or decree, hence the 'Domesday' book. Its modern form means, to pronounce sentence against someone or something. That is the sense in which I am using it today. The former meaning has particular importance when it comes to kingdoms which are much governed by decrees & statutes. So in a strict sense it is doomed because it is governed by statute but what I am really asking is whether the monarchy in Britain is facing its end?

## **Current challenges to the Monarchy**

At the turn of the 20th century there was a relentless onslaught against the Sovereign in the newsmedia. These are just some of the headlines from the newspapers.

'End Legal ban on RC monarchs', 'Review of Royal Peculiars', 'Queen Camilla - its not impossible', 'Camilla comes out', 'Historical body sees no place for a royal' (says the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts), 'Big response to Queen's TV "faith" broadcast', 'Forcing the Queen's hand' (foundations of the monarchy eroded by politicians speaking for the sovereign), 'Symbols of Crown to go in Ulster reforms', 'Sovereign loses role as students' final arbiter' (i.e. as Visitor, established in the Middle Ages), 'QCs in Ulster no longer pledge to serve the Queen', 'Mow Mowlem calls on Royal Family to move out of Buckingham Palace', 'Black lace and pearls for a modern classic - visiting Pope', 'Pop group snubs the Queen' (at the Welsh Assembly opening), 'Can the Royals retain the people's support?'

Since then other disclosures have led to the demise of the Royal Family concept which has been a terrible blow to many aspects of the United Kingdom, but is it a death blow? The attitude of Jo Public has changed from one of respect for this institution to a 'chummy' relationship at best. Not only this, but their attitude has changed to, 'if the Royals can do it, then why shouldn't we?'

In these circumstances it is easy for people who never knew King George VI or his daughter as the the young Queen Elizabeth and when the people were more aware of constitutional affairs than they are these days, to write the Throne off as part of a bygone era.

Are there more important considerations here than mere fashion or feeling, matters which are timeless or at least, affairs which will continue until that particular time appointed in the plan of Almighty God?

### **What are the origins of kings & kingdoms?**

In the Scriptures kingdoms begin with Babel,

‘ ... Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the LORD. And **the beginning of his kingdom was Babel**, and Erech, ... ’.

Genesis ch.10 vv 9-10

The next mention is with regard to the city of Sodom.

‘And it came to pass in the days of Amraphel **king** of Shinar, Arioch **king** of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer **king** of Elam, and Tidal **king** of nations; That these made war with Bera **king of Sodom**, and with Birsha **king** of Gomorrah, Shinab **king** of Admah, and Shemeber **king** of Zeboiim, and the **king** of Bela, which is Zoar. All these were joined together in the vale of Siddim, which is the salt sea.’

Genesis ch.14 vv 1-3

The third occurrence involves Abraham.

‘And I will make thee [Abraham] exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and **kings shall come out of thee.**’

Genesis ch.17 v.6

Not long after this prophecy was uttered, Ishmael was born to him through his concubine Hagar and from this child descend the true Arabs. Thus it is that these look to Abraham as their forefather particularly as many became princes of royal descent thus partly fulfilling the prophecy. In reality Abraham was a king in his own right, having conquered ‘*Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of nations*’ (Genesis ch.14 v.1) mentioned previously.

The promise of a line of kings was independently prophesied of Abram’s wife Sarai (later Sarah).

‘And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; **kings of people shall be of her.**’

Genesis ch.17 v.16

It was then repeated to their grandson Jacob.

‘ ... God appeared unto Jacob again, when he came out of Padanaram, and blessed him. And God said unto him, ... be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and **kings shall come out of thy loins;**’

Genesis ch.35 vv 9 -11

Clearly, the promise of sovereignty does not just extend to Abraham’s children the Ishmaelites but also to his offspring by Sarah. Here then is a remarkable thing, he is prophesied to be the ancestor of many kings to follow him, in essence Arabs, Jews and Christians look to their forefather Abraham both temporal and spiritual for he is highly regarded as the man of righteousness, their founder patriarch.

Jacob, late in his life, prophetically elaborated on the depth of this promise when addressing his sons.

**‘The sceptre shall not depart from Judah,** nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.’

Genesis ch.49 v.10

Two people are mentioned here and both are concerned with a throne (where the sceptre is held). The first refers to Judah and his descendants, the other relates to ‘Shiloh’. Judah was the fourth son born to Jacob but Shiloh is a different person altogether and the name means ‘the one of peace, tranquility’. In a slightly different form it was used some centuries later as the name of the place where priests such as Samuel dwelt.

Note that a transition is prophesied from one to the other - Judah to Shiloh. Also, a proviso is given to the transition; the first would not end until the second succeeded it. Shiloh in biblical language refers to the Prince of Peace, the King of Kings, so in effect the prophecy stipulates that people from the line of Judah will continue to govern throughout every age until Jesus Christ comes in glory. The prophecy then, has both temporal and eternal fulfilment.

### **When did secular sovereignty start in Israel?**

It took several generations for the first part of Judah’s prophecy to reach visible fulfilment. In effect this was because when the tribes of Israel departed from Egypt the Lord Jehovah was their sovereign but by the time of the ‘Judges’ this sovereignty was challenged and egotism prevailed.

'In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.'

Judges ch.21 v.25

Before long, the people came to clamour for a visible monarch amongst them which culminated in Samuel the prophet declaring,

'And ye have this day rejected your God, who himself saved you out of all your adversities and your tribulations; and ye have said unto him, Nay, but set a king over us ... '.

1 Samuel ch.10 v.19

In the event Saul, from the tribe of Benjamin rather than the line of Judah, was the first to be chosen. Nevertheless he reigned for a number of years over some of the tribes before being replaced by David who came to reign over all the tribes of Israel. David was indeed of the line of Judah and thus was the first to fulfil the prophecy given by his forefather Jacob. It was in David's lifetime that the extent of the prophecy was narrowed down to only his line of descendants. That is, 'the sceptre' would continue with the line of Judah through the family of David; this was reiterated by both Samuel and the Psalmist.

'... I will stablish the throne of his (David's) kingdom for ever.'

2 Samuel ch.7 v.13

'I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations. Selah.'

Psalms 89 vv 3-4

### **The history of Judah & Israel's sovereignty is a sad one to read**

The Davidic monarchy barely lasted a generation before turning from God.

'For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father.'

1 Kings ch.11 v.4

Following Solomon's death what was an united kingdom of Israel and Judah divided.

'And when Rehoboam was come to Jerusalem, he assembled all the house of Judah, with the tribe of Benjamin, an hundred and fourscore thousand chosen men, which were warriors, to fight

against the house of Israel, to bring the kingdom again to Rehoboam the son of Solomon.'

1 Kings ch.12 v.21

Records show that after this division the Northern Kingdom (now known as the Kingdom of Israel), from start to end, could not field one king that was not 'evil'. Judah's track record was little better with more ungodly kings than God-fearing ones. Thus, one could say we shouldn't expect much better from sovereigns today - they are only human after all.

### **Where do we go from here?**

In the days of the British Empire the phrase, 'an Englishman's word is his bond' came to the fore. Wherever an Englishman travelled, he went with the protection of 'The Crown' (the reigning monarch). Hence Royal Mail, Royal Patent, Commander in Chief of the armed forces, Supreme Governor of the C of E and so on. Not 'head' of these note, but governor by the grace of God. Wherever the sovereign had jurisdiction, it was through the idea of that temporal sovereign that subjects could plead the grace of the eternal God and protection.

'For in him we live, and move, and have our being; ...'

Acts ch.17 v.28

More recently there has been a dramatic transition from this concept. Lately, just as in the Old Testament the people rejected the King of Kings for a mortal king who was drawn from amongst themselves, so instead of the throne being an hereditary affair, there is a move towards producing a head of state by election. Today as we approach the Second Coming of Christ, people reject God's ambassador in preference for their own self-centredness. 'God save the King/Queen' has been replaced by 'xxx rules OK'. That is, the reference point has moved from the sovereign under God to the centrality and omniscience of the human being. As such we have lost sight of what human life is for.

Examples of this abound around us, such as these.

- The greatest discovery heralded in the year 2000 was the Human Genome Experiment.
- When politicians were planning the Dome for the Millennium celebrations - the Second Millennium of Christ that is - the main attraction was not a cross or even the history of Christianity but the 'human body zone'. What is more, self-centredness could

not be more emphasised than the crowds actually walking through the model of the human body itself!

- The crowning moment of the public performance was the building of a Tower of Babel! Remember the first kingdom mentioned in Scripture was that of Babel.

We have now reached the stage where some people say a nation with these sort of attitudes no longer has need of a sovereign, a throne, unless its loss threatens the tourist industry perhaps!

### **Why does emphasis still need to be placed on the throne?**

The Throne in Britain is no airy-fairy one that originated in medieval times to meet the needs of the people; it is unique in many ways when compared with the few others that still remain in the world.

The students guide to the British Constitution, *Westminster Workshop* by R.K. Mosley 1965 states,

1. Britain has the oldest surviving monarchy in the world.
2. The sovereign is Head of State, the armed forces, the Commonwealth as well as being Supreme Governor of the Established Church of England.
3. Technically the Sovereign's approval (the Royal Assent) is necessary for all laws passed by Parliament and for the appointment of all members of the Government.
4. The Sovereign still has certain prerogative powers enabling them to make decisions without the consent of Parliament.  
Since King Egbert of Essex (802-39) gained power over the whole of England, there has always been a King or Queen reigning over the country except for the short Commonwealth period of 1649-60 and even then there were still people alive in the line of succession to claim the throne.

So its lineage is ancient, being found in the sovereigns of Scotland and previously Ireland before the time of Christ.

The Coronation Service is paralleled by the crowning of kings in ancient Israel.

- a shout goes up 'God save the king/queen';  
'... And all the people shouted, and said, God save the king.'

1 Samuel ch.10 v.24

- the monarch is crowned sitting on or standing near a pillar, (the Stone of Scone is now used);  
'And the king stood by a pillar, ... .' 2 Kings ch.23 v.3
- the sovereign is anointed with oil;  
' ... fill thine horn with oil, and go, ... .' 1 Samuel ch.16 v.1
- the high priest or prophet officiates at this ceremony;  
'And Zadok the priest took an horn of oil out of the tabernacle, and anointed Solomon. ...' 1 Kings ch.1 v.39
- the monarch takes an oath of allegiance to God and people;  
'And the king stood by a pillar, and made a covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD, and to keep his commandments and his testimonies and his statutes with all their heart and all their soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. And all the people stood to the covenant'. 2 Kings ch.23 v.3
- they are given a sceptre (rod) to show their authority;  
'The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, ... .' Genesis ch.49 v.10
- They are handed a copy of the Law (the holy Bible);  
' ... and put upon him the crown, and gave him the testimony, and made him king ...'. 2 Chronicles ch.23 v.11

### **What authorises the sovereign and the throne?**

- They reign from a throne, their institution is on that throne.
- Emblems of the Coronation service are those of authority and symbols of the coming everlasting kingdom; Coronation stone, sceptre, crown, ring, allegiance - all are a necessary part of the whole package. [Note, the King of Kings is that 'Rock' see 1 Corinthians ch.10 v.4]
- The Coronation stone (the OT 'pillar') is at the seat of the enthronement.

### **These are some of the documents that support its antiquity,**

- The Declaration of Arbroath, in Scotland, drawn up in 1320 mentions the origins of the people being found in ancient Israel



whilst in Egypt and it describes how many generations there were in between.

- The guide book to Westminster Abbey equates the Coronation Stone with biblical Jacob at Bethel (*'Tradition identifies this stone with the one upon which Jacob rested his head at Bethel ... Jacob's sons carried it to Egypt and from thence it passed to Spain with King Gathelus, son of Cecrops, the builder of Athens'*).
- At Windsor Castle and Hatfield House there are family trees which trace the Royal Family back to Old Testament times.

Sovereigns, though not necessarily intervening themselves, guarantee freedom and fairness for their subjects because they are an ambassador for Christ. The Royal Coat of Arms reads 'Dieu et mon droit' (meaning 'God and my right'). That is, there is a hereditary right to the throne and the occupier is there to reflect the mercy, wisdom and compassion of God. In essence then, it is the person that sits on the throne that is relevant rather than the throne itself.

### **What power does the sovereign still have?**

The Coronation Oath states this.

*Archbishop:*

'Will you solemnly promise and swear to govern the Peoples of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the Union of South Africa, Pakistan and Ceylon, and of your Possessions and the other Territories to any of them belonging or pertaining, according to their respective laws and customs?'

*The Sovereign answers:*

'I solemnly promise so to do.'

It is in accordance with this oath that the sovereign;

1. Gives their assent to all Bills passed by Parliament.
2. Opens and prorogues each session of Parliament (& General Synod of the Church of England).
3. Dissolves Parliament on the advice of the Prime Minister.

When the **financial cost of the monarchy** is considered it is worth noting that in the past much Crown Land has been handed over to the nation in exchange for a regular 'Civil List' payment. The net income from this Crown land (over £2M in 1965) more than compensates for the expense to the taxpayer of all Civil List salaries paid to the Royal Family.

## **Why is the monarchy still important today?**

- A person must continue to hold the sceptre until Shiloh comes. Do not forget that there were times in history when the throne was threatened, even removed but a person of the Royal Line still existed. Elsewhere in Europe there are even now other members of the Royal Line, though more distant from the direct line of succession. The Bible makes it clear that a descendant of the royal line of David (from Biblical Judah) will continue until the coming of Christ in glory as King of Kings.
- It is little wonder that Satan targets this prize with temptation, abuse and ridicule for it leads directly to the eternal reign of Christ, his great enemy.
- The visible kingdom on earth is a lesser working model of what is to come. It gives us a glimpse and hope of a greater future than the folly of man promises.
- Recognising the existence of the sovereign (whether good or bad) is a way of acknowledging the divine right rather than human rights.
- We live in perilous times in which threats to the throne are enormous, but by the grace of God it is preserved until He comes whose right it is to reign upon it for ever.
- In this respect we pray for the establishment of this coming kingdom and its endurance in the Lord's Prayer:

***'Thy kingdom come,***

***Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. . . .***

***For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory,***

***for ever and ever. Amen'***

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