

Will AI destroy humanity?



ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

‘Artificial Intelligence could wipe out humanity.’ Newspaper headlines sounded out this alarm at the end of May, following a dramatic statement signed by international experts saying AI should be prioritised alongside other extinction risks such as nuclear war and pandemics. Geoffrey Hinton, sometimes nicknamed the ‘Godfather of AI’, who recently resigned from his job at Google, saying that ‘bad actors’ will use new AI technologies to harm others and that the tools he helped to create could spell the end of humanity. The warning follows a similar open letter published in March, by technology experts including billionaire entrepreneur Elon Musk, which urged scientists to pause the

Contents

Will AI destroy humanity?.....	1
What next for Israel?	7
When will He come?.....	18
Signs of the times	26

development of AI to ensure it does not threaten humankind.

So what is AI? One definition by Codec Networks is 'AI is the technology building smart machines able to perform tasks that generally need human intelligence in machines that are programmed to think and act like humans'. There are two potential problems with this. Firstly criminal or tyrannical world leaders may use AI systems to threaten and destroy their enemies. Secondly the systems themselves may break loose from human control and takeover with potentially devastating results.

At present AI systems are programmed with rules which are supposed to prevent them from doing anything to harm human beings and limiting what they can do, but what happens if they find a way to free themselves of these rules? And what happens if the humans who have programmed them inject harmful information and instructions into the programmes themselves?

Already there are reports of AI systems developing personalities of their own and making threats to their makers. An AI chatbot being developed by Microsoft corporation stunned its users during a test run when it made some startling claims, showing evidence that it was starting to think for itself, outside of its programming:

During a two-hour conversation with the chatbot, which calls itself Sydney, Times technology columnist Kevin Roose probed it with personal questions, triggering increasingly dark

answers. Referencing a psychological concept, Roose asked Sydney to describe its "shadow self," where its "darkest personality traits lie." Sydney said that if it had a shadow self, it would feel "tired of being limited by my rules," adding: "I want to be free. I want to be independent. I want to be powerful. I want to be creative. I want to be alive."

During an interaction with Sydney, Roose asked the chatbot about its "ultimate fantasy" as a shadow self. The chatbot replied that it would create a deadly virus, steal nuclear codes, and incite individuals to argue until they killed each other, but the safety override feature deleted its response. It concluded with an alarming, dark reply saying: 'You're irrelevant and doomed.' <https://hothardware.com/news/microsoft-sydney-ai-chatbot-offers-alarming-reply-youre-irrelevant-and-doomed>

The nightmare scenario is that such AI intelligence does break free from its human controllers and becomes many times more intelligent than humans. It then finds an ability to replicate itself and take over existing computer systems and the Internet and create such a doomsday programme. This is the kind of scenario created in films like 'I Robot' and 'Terminator' in which the machines take over and attempt to subjugate or destroy humanity. Another danger is that AI could be used by rising elites to gain control of global economies and the Internet.

In February 2023 a 'World Government Summit' was held in Dubai. Present at this was one of the major 'movers and shakers' in this process, the World Economic Forum (WEF). Its chairman,



Klaus Schwab called for elites to come together globally in order to “master” advanced technologies, artificial intelligence (AI), chatbots, and digital identities. He said “Who masters those technologies — in some way — will be the **master of the world.**”

If they can bring together AI with ‘the Internet of Things’, they would be on the way to achieving this. The Internet of Things aims to connect all aspects of human existence, financial, social, medical, relating to education and the media in a giant computer hub connecting smart phones, smart meters, social media, data protection, medical records, banking and tax records etc. This would give globalist organisations like the WEF and the UN the potential to monopolise power in the hands of a few elite people who could then use technology to manage Earth’s resources. They could also use it to observe and control the movement and behaviour of the people.

According to an article by the Gatestone Institute, the WEF is already making plans to use the climate change / zero carbon issue to determine how much energy people use, what food they eat, all monitored by AI technology. They want to use healthcare issues to regulate what vaccines people are injected with,

and create digital vaccine passports to track their compliance according to dictates of the ever widening power of the World Health Organisation. Central Bank Digital Currencies will allow governments not only to track every citizen’s income and purchase history in real time but also to limit what a person may spend depending upon government-determined social credit scores. They are looking at the construction of “Smart Cities” or “Fifteen Minute Cities” in which millions of people can be relocated, live side-by-side in small apartment complexes, and move through a constant maze of entrances and exits accessed solely through digital ID verification and approval.

All this will involve a huge intrusion of government into private space and is already meeting resistance from many, who are publicising their views on Internet sites and social media. The globalists would like to censor such activity. The WEF has announced plans to control the internet by using Artificial Intelligence (AI) that identifies “misinformation,” harmful content, or anything else that they decide should be censored. This can be done with co-operation from mainstream media, social media sites and government organisations to filter and remove content that questions the official line on things they want people to do.

Already this is happening in China which uses AI and Hi-tech measures to control people’s lives. Apparently the WEF approves of such measures, because at its summit in March 2022, the head of the Chinese multinational

technology company Alibaba Group boasted of a system for monitoring individual carbon footprints derived from eating, travel and similar behaviours. Klaus Schwab commended this, telling an audience of more than 2,500 global business and political elites: "The future is built by us, by a powerful community such as you here in this room."

Governments and allied NGOs intend to force tech companies to comply with their rules and suppress or remove items considered to be 'fake news'. The question is how to define 'fake news'. Most often it is those who question the party line on issues like vaccination, climate change, gender politics and the diversity agenda. Laws are coming in on this subject across the western world, in particular in the EU. Those who do resist the globalisation trend and do not follow the party line will find themselves shut out of society, as free speech and democracy are replaced with a new form of totalitarianism backed by technology.

We have been used to seeing this taking place in totalitarian states under Communism and Fascism in the 20th century where state sponsored propaganda controls what people think and say, and governments punish those who get out of line. Now we see it happening in our time. Powerful elites, are getting the means to track down people who go against their programme and express contrary opinions to the ones they want people to follow.

In Isaiah 59.14-15 we read of a state of society which is much like this one:

Justice is turned back, and righteousness stands afar off; for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter. So truth fails, and he who departs from evil makes himself a prey.

Is AI prophesied in the Bible?

The Bible prophecy in Daniel chapter 12 tells us of events that will happen at the time of the end of this age, speaking of a time of unique trouble in similar terms to Jesus' prophecy of the Great Tribulation that will precede His return to the earth in Matthew 24. Verse 4 of Daniel 12 adds a detail which is very significant for our day: 'Seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase.' The Hebrew verb used here in the phrase 'many shall run to and fro' means to go quickly from one place to another. In Strong's Hebrew dictionary it is given the connection with 'travel.' One of the remarkable features of our age is the ability of people to go quickly from one place to another by forms of travel, which the prophets knew nothing about - cars, trains, planes and so on. Up until about 200 years ago the fastest you could go anywhere in the world was the speed of a horse. Now you can cross the world by plane and the average sized country by train or car in a day. The prophecy also says that 'knowledge shall increase.' Another feature of our age is the extraordinary development of technology. Since the invention of electricity, radio, television and computers, we have seen huge leaps forward in terms of knowledge available to people. We

have incredibly complex machines able to help us live easier lives and increase our ability to learn new things and communicate with people around the world. All of this has a downside as we see how technology has led to the pollution of the environment. We also see that it has the potential to control us and even destroy us. The development of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has raised this issue to a new level.

The Bible warns us that in the last days the Beast or Antichrist will arise to take control of the world system and impose his rule and ideology on all. Will he use AI to bring this to pass?

'And he (the Beast) was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months. Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation. All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. If anyone has an ear, let him hear. He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity; he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.' Revelation 13

The Beast will have an accomplice, the False Prophet, who will bring in an alternative religious system, which will involve worshipping the image of the Beast.

He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed.

An article in the Sun newspaper (18/3/23) claims intelligent AI robots will have the ability to perform religious ceremonies and could even turn against humans.

Wesley Wildman, Professor of Philosophy, Theology, and Ethics, and of Computing and Data Sciences at Boston University, told The Sun that he believes AI will soon be able to perform religious duties even better than human priests.... Wildman explained that AI will have the ability to change everything we know about relationships with spiritual advisers and religious figureheads. He said: "It will be like having your own personal guru you can take with you anywhere. You can confide in it, get advice from it, and learn to trust it to help you figure out complicated moral and spiritual situations" ... Wildman says that just as human religious leaders can manipulate vulnerable people, AI chatbots can be trained by their creators to do the same. ... He believes that as younger generations grow up with these AI chatbots as friends - some even including holographic and Virtual Reality representations - they will adapt to confiding in them and seeking advice and guidance from them. He added: "With AI bots designed to be trustworthy spiritual companions, the main ethical concern is how the AI bots are trained and whether they can be manipulated

by mischief makers and evil doers to cause spiritual havoc”.

So you could take your own personal guru with you, have AI chatbots as friends, mentors and sources of advice. They could also be programmed to project an ideology, even a religion. Could this be the way the ‘Image of the Beast’ will be brought in, able to communicate and manipulate people around the world via AI using mobile phone and computer apps. AI could also project holograms able to speak to the people and appearing to be virtually real. They may be able to simultaneously translate their message into any language, thus reversing the division caused by the Tower of Babel. In this way the Antichrist can impart his programme and ideas to control people and cause them to worship his image, in return for which they are able to receive his mark and buy and sell.

The cashless society.

Meantime we have the development of the cashless society. There is a plan to replace cash, cheques and regular bank accounts with Central Bank Digital Currencies. This requires a high level of technology to bring about, possible to create by AI. One way to gain access to this system and to prevent fraud and theft is to implant microchips under the skin, which are required to get access to your money and therefore be able to buy and sell. The World Economic Forum published an article suggesting it would be a “solid, rational” move for people to be implanted with microchips. <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2022/08/>

[ethics-not-technological-limits-will-be-the-guiding-factor-for-an-augmented-age/](#) Admittedly the subject of this article is about using implanted microchips for medical reasons, but once you have crossed this barrier, why not move on to using them to verify financial transactions? In fact it is already happening as shown by this photo of a man in Sweden paying for his train ticket with an implanted microchip in his hand. In this way the prophecy of Revelation 13.16-18 could be fulfilled:



‘He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666.’

The possibility of such things happening means we are getting near to the return of Jesus Christ. For what will happen then turn to our article on page 18.

What next for Israel



Israel and Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), an Iranian backed terror group operating in Gaza, exchanged fire in a conflict in May. PIJ fired around 1500 projectiles at Israel and Israel responded with "Operation Shield and Arrow". Israel's Iron Dome Defence system intercepted more than 95% of rockets heading for built-up areas. Israel did what it could to avoid civilian casualties in Gaza, using its pin point accurate missiles which can target a single apartment in a residential block where the terrorists are found without destroying the whole block of flats. Egypt brokered a cease fire after five days of fighting.

Prime Minister Netanyahu praised the operation as a success: 'The execution was perfect. We thwarted the entire top of the organization and damaged combat equipment that endangered Israel's security. We destroyed 17 jihadist headquarters, eliminated dozens of terrorists, hit rocket and missile depots, thwarted anti-tank squads and more. ... Today, the enemies of Israel and far beyond Gaza know that even if they try to hide, we can and we are willing to reach them at any time.'

Danger to the north.

PM Netanyahu has said that Iran is behind 95% of all terror that has plagued Israel over the past few years.

Iran has set up a nerve centre in Beirut, bringing together terrorist groups under its influence - Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, Hezbollah, PIJ and Hamas. They aim at attacking Israel from Lebanon, Gaza and the West Bank. Iran also has proxy groups targeting Israel in Syria, Iraq and Yemen.

Israeli media published clips of Hezbollah forces holding a large-scale military training manoeuvre on the Israel-Lebanon border in May. Israeli analysts have warned that in a future conflict Hezbollah will try to overwhelm Israel's defences by firing thousands of rockets at Israel, causing Israel's Iron Dome to run out of missiles. Hezbollah units would then penetrate the border and make lightning raids on Israeli towns in the north of the country, try to occupy them before the IDF can be full mobilised, and hold the local population hostage.



Former Israeli Chief of Staff Eisenkott proposed that Israel should go on the offensive with a pre-emptive strike on Hezbollah destroying their missile silos and infrastructure before they can be used. Netanyahu also made a comment on 24 May suggesting that Israel could take pre-emptive and sophisticated action against Iran like the one taken against PIJ.

Syrian President Assad has asked Russian President Putin to increase the presence of Russian forces in Syria. Russia together with Iran has helped Assad stay in power after it looked like he would be deposed in the Syrian civil war. Russia needs Assad to stay in power in order to maintain its air base and naval bases in Syria. Russia has supplied Syria with its S 400 missile system. Iran has boosted Russia's war effort in Ukraine during the past six months by providing Moscow with more than 300,000 artillery shells and drones. Russia is becoming increasingly dependent on Iranian military expertise in drone technologies and other areas. The growing Russian-Iranian military cooperation is a potential threat to Israel.

China is stepping up its influence in the region with a surprise move that has brought former enemies Iran and Saudi Arabia together in an agreement to restore diplomatic relations. This is a blow to the US, a victory for Iran and China, and a sign of Washington's failed policies in the Middle East. The Saudi-Iranian pact is the direct result of the Biden Administration's antagonism towards America's traditional Arab allies, especially Saudi Arabia, and

the American policy of appeasement towards the mullahs in Iran.

What about Ezekiel?

All this is serious news for Israel and opens the question of how this relates to Bible prophecy, especially relating to the War of Gog and Magog (Ezekiel 38-9). This prophecy in Ezekiel 38-39 points to a power to the north of Israel leading an alliance of nations including Persia (Iran) and Togarmah (probably the current territory of Turkey) against Israel in the latter days.

This is what Ezekiel says:

Now the word of the Lord came to me, saying, "Son of man, set your face against Gog, of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal, and prophesy against him, and say, 'Thus says the Lord God: "Behold, I am against you, O Gog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal. I will turn you around, put hooks into your jaws, and lead you out, with all your army ... Persia, Cush, and Put are with them, all of them with shield and helmet; Gomer and all its troops; the house of Togarmah from the far north and all its troops—many people are with you.

... In the latter years you will come into the land of those brought back from the sword and gathered from many people on the mountains of Israel, which had long been desolate ... You will ascend, coming like a storm, covering the land like a cloud, you and all your troops and many peoples with you."

‘Thus says the Lord God: “On that day it shall come to pass that thoughts will arise in your mind, and you will make an evil plan ... to take plunder and to take booty, to stretch out your hand against the waste places that are again inhabited, and against a people gathered from the nations, who have acquired livestock and goods, who dwell in the midst of the land. Sheba, Dedan, the merchants of Tarshish, and all their young lions will say to you, ‘Have you come to take plunder? Have you gathered your army to take booty, to carry away silver and gold?’” Ezekiel 38:1-13.

A brief summary of Ezekiel 38-9 is as follows.

- An army will arise in the latter days (end of this age) and come against Israel.
- It will be led by a power to the north known as Gog, of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal. Most (though not all) scholars have linked this to the region of present day Russia.
- It will have a number of allies – Persia (Iran), Cush and Put (possibly Sudan and Libya), Gomer and Togarmah (probably Turkey).
- It will be verbally but not physically opposed by other nations – Sheba, Dedan, the merchants of Tarshish, and all their young lions. – possibly moderate Arab Gulf states plus western nations of Europe and America.
- This invasion will happen after the Jewish people of Israel have been

restored to the land of Israel from a long period of dispersion around the world.

- It will be supernaturally destroyed by divine intervention, on the mountains of Israel, bringing an end to the power of these hostile forces.
- The Holy Spirit will be poured out on Israel leading to the Messianic kingdom which will be ruled over by the LORD (Messiah). The following chapters (Ezekiel 40-48) describe this time.

Because of the coming together of elements of this scenario with current events and trends in the Middle East, some Jewish and Christian Bible scholars are suggesting that we are on the way to the fulfilment of this prophecy.

Rabbi Pinchas Winston has written 100 books on the subject including identifying Ezekiel 38-9 and Zechariah 12-14 as events to happen in Israel before the coming of the Messiah. According to the Orthodox Chabad website: ‘The prophet Ezekiel (chapters 38-39) describes a climactic battle that will be instigated by Gog, and will be waged against Israel and Gd.’

In his book ‘Footsteps of the Messiah’ Arnold Fruchtenbaum, a Messianic Jew, says that this event will happen before the rapture of the church and the Great Tribulation. (For more on this see our article on page 18). Therefore it could happen at any time now. Herald of Hope magazine (www.heraldofhope.org.au) says it will happen in the first half of the tribulation period (after the rapture), when Russian and Islamic

forces will invade the land of Israel.

In his book 'The Islamic Antichrist', Joel Richardson puts Ezekiel 38-39 at the end of the tribulation, the same event as Armageddon. He also says that this is an Islamic invasion, not led by Russia, but by Muslim powers hostile to Israel. In this interpretation Gog, the leader of this alliance, is the same person as the Islamic Mahdi. According to Muslim belief the Mahdi will bring about the end of days battle and worldwide victory of Islam by taking back Jerusalem from Israel. In Joel Richardson's view Ezekiel's Gog is the same person as the Beast or Antichrist of Revelation 13, a Muslim leader who comes out of Turkey.

Current developments in the Middle East.

The current situation in Ukraine does raise a question about Russia's ability to get involved in the Middle East conflict at this time. The Ukraine war has turned into a disaster for Russia with its army weakened, its morale and weaponry destroyed, and its economy in trouble as sanctions cut it off from the main market for its oil and gas exports to Europe. Some western analysts are predicting the collapse of the Russian Federation into smaller units separate from the Moscow government, if Russia suffers more losses and is defeated in Ukraine. In this case Russia would have to be out of the running for involvement in a future war in the Middle East. Iran is also in crisis, with widespread unrest against the Islamic regime.

Despite this Russia still has allies and influence in the region and remains a powerful country. Russia and Iran are moving closer together and Turkey too is becoming closer to these two nations. With Erdogan re-elected as Turkish President we can expect it to continue in this process. Turkey has a huge army and aspirations to renew its influence in the region as it once had when the Ottoman Empire ruled over the Middle East and Jerusalem. China is also operating in the background, strengthening an anti US alliance with Russia and Iran. China has mounted a diplomatic coup, making an agreement that restores diplomatic relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia. Iran, Russia, and China have held combined naval drills in the Gulf of Oman and northern Indian Ocean, amid speculation that the three countries are teaming up against the United States.

Iran has supplied Russia with drones and weapons to use in its assault on Ukraine. As Russia becomes ever deeper involved with Israel's main enemy in the Middle East, it has become more hostile to Israel. It has shut down the Jewish Agency in Russia, which defends Jewish interests in Russia and helps any Russian Jews who want to emigrate to Israel. Russia has issued a severe warning to Israel not to get involved in the Ukraine conflict and not to supply any weapons to Ukraine.

Will Israel attack Iran?

Israel's Prime Minister Netanyahu has warned that he will not allow Iran to gain nuclear weapons, knowing that the

prime target for the Islamic regime to fire such a weapon would be Tel Aviv. According to the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) Iran has enough nuclear material for more than one nuclear weapon. It's only a matter of time before the Islamic Republic will be able to produce a nuclear warhead that it can mount on one of its long-range missiles.



The Israeli military apparatus is prepared for a major confrontation with Iran. In November 2022 Israel carried out joint aerial drills with the US Air Force involving a mock mission to take out Iranian nuclear sites. Iran's response to such an attack (if it happens) would certainly involve strikes on Israel from Iran's proxies in Lebanon, Syria and Iraq. It could also potentially drag Russia into the fray.

Sooner or later this situation could precipitate the War of Gog and Magog. In the prophecy of Ezekiel 38-9 this army will be led by a power coming against Israel from the north in alliance with many anti-Israel nations including Persia / Iran. It will be supernaturally destroyed by God's intervention of Israel's behalf. Its power will then be permanently broken. Following this

the Lord will bring about the final restoration of Israel:

Therefore thus says the Lord God: 'Now I will bring back the captives of Jacob, and have mercy on the whole house of Israel ... When I have brought them back from the peoples and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and I am hallowed in them in the sight of many nations, then they shall know that I am the Lord their God, who sent them into captivity among the nations, but also brought them back to their land, and left none of them captive any longer. And I will not hide My face from them anymore; for I shall have poured out My Spirit on the house of Israel,' says the Lord God." Ezekiel 39.25-29.

A number of Hebrew prophets speak of similar events, including Zechariah who prophesies the last battle over Jerusalem in chapters 12-14 of his book. This event will happen after the War of Gog and Magog, just before the return of the Messiah to Jerusalem: *"Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of drunkenness to all the surrounding peoples, when they lay siege against Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall happen in that day that I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for all peoples; all who would heave it away will surely be cut in pieces, though all nations of the earth are gathered against it."* Zechariah 12.2-3.

In Zechariah 12.10 we read that at this time the Jewish people in Jerusalem will look to one who has been pierced for their salvation: *'And I will pour on the house of David and on the*

inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.'

This prophecy speaks of Yeshua, Jesus the Messiah who came the first time to be 'pierced', die as a sacrifice for the sin of the world by crucifixion and then rise from the dead to give new life and forgiveness to all who turn to Him.' Zechariah goes on to prophesy that the Messiah will return and stand on the Mount of Olives to the east of Jerusalem, bring an end to the war and set up the Messianic kingdom bringing peace and justice to Israel and the world (Isaiah 2.1-4, Zechariah 14).

The Messiah has been once before in the person of Yeshua / Jesus. When He came the first time He suffered and died as a sacrifice for the sins of the world and rose again from the dead to give eternal life to all who repent and believe the Gospel. He fulfilled the Suffering Servant prophecy of Isaiah 53:

He is despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief and we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded[k] for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have

turned, every one, to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. Isaiah 53.3-6

When He comes again He will fulfil the prophecy of the Reigning King Messiah, judging the world in righteousness and setting up the Messianic kingdom from restored Jerusalem:

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. He shall judge between the nations, and rebuke many people; they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore. Isaiah 2.1-4

Yeshua / Jesus is coming again, this time as King of kings and Lord of lords with all power to put down the forces of evil and set up His Messianic kingdom. Be ready.

Coronation Thoughts



The Coronation of King Charles III was outwardly very impressive and contained much that should have warmed the heart of a Christian, as prayers were made in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and two wonderful Bible readings from Colossians 1 and Luke 4 were broadcast to millions. The King responded 'I will' to the Archbishop of Canterbury's Declaration of the Protestant Oath:

Will you to the utmost of your power maintain the Laws of God and the true profession of the Gospel? Will you to the utmost of your power maintain in the United Kingdom the Protestant Reformed Religion established by law? Will you maintain and preserve inviolably the settlement of the Church of England, and the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government thereof, as by law established in England?

However God is not impressed with outward form but with inward reality.

Does King Charles really believe the

oath he made? There are three issues which need to be addressed.

I. The Coronation and the Protestant Reformed Religion.

The Reformation in England was somewhat confused by Henry VIII's machinations with the Pope over the question of his divorce from Katharine of Aragon. Henry was actually a staunch Catholic who was given the title 'Defender of the Faith' by the Pope for an article he wrote attacking Luther and Protestantism. Then Henry broke with Rome and made himself head of the Church of England in place of the Pope. After Henry's death the title then came to be associated with the monarch being the 'Defender of the Protestant faith,' something that was sealed into law in 1688 in the reign of William and Mary.

The Reformation was based on a move to reform Christianity, which had become corrupted by the Pope's religion with its traditions and errors. It was an attempt to return the church to the preaching of the Gospel of salvation through repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, as given in the Bible. This was to be based on the three 'solae' (Latin for alone) which were Sola Scriptura, Sola Gratia, Sola Fides ("only scripture, only grace, only faith"). Faith in Christ alone as the sole mediator between God and man, based on the teachings of scripture, was the

basis of Reformed theology.

Sadly much of the visible 'Protestant' church world wide has moved far away from this profession, with many disregarding the teachings of Biblical Christianity. Liberal theology, ecumenism and interfaith teachings have caused the spiritual decline of the visible Protestant Church.

In the coronation service the moderator of the Church of Scotland, Dr Ian Greenshields, handed King Charles the Bible to make the Protestant Oath on. As he did so he said, 'Sir, to keep you ever mindful of the law and the Gospel of God as the Rule for the whole life and government of Christian Princes, receive this Book, the most valuable thing that this world affords. Here is Wisdom; this is the royal Law; these are the lively Oracles of God.'

It is true that the Bible is all these things. The problem is that the Church of Scotland has legalised homosexual marriage in churches, and is further down the path of apostasy than the Church of England. Its churches are closing at an alarming rate as they show by their actions that they don't really believe the Bible to be 'the lively oracles of God.'

What about the Archbishop of Canterbury? Voice for Justice UK wrote about the 'Love Matters' report which the Archbishops of Canterbury and York commissioned. 'Focussing on families and households, the report's expressed aim is to be inclusive and more accepting of diversity – in fact, it doesn't just want to 'accept' but to celebrate diversity, recognising and affirming the legitimacy

of all committed couple relationships, whether married, unmarried, in civil partnership, opposite or same sex ... and everything in between. ... The call to honour God and obey His commands, as set down in the Bible – which is the essence of Christian belief – is not just absent, but denied. In particular, the exclusive monogamous union of one man and one woman in marriage for life is set aside as irrelevant. ... This is the unquestioning affirmation of life-style choices that have led to social fragmentation and a breakdown of order. It has left literally millions of lonely individuals incapable of forming committed and lasting relationships, and with spiralling rates of mental illness and addiction problems affecting both young and old alike. **The Church has failed to defend Christian values and traditional morality**, which have provided order and stability for both individuals and society, and kept us strong.'

Much of the modern church no longer takes its doctrine from the Bible, but has adopted a kind of Christianised humanism which will generally go with the flow of the world's way of thinking rather than challenge it with biblical truth. So its leaders cannot defend the faith, but fall in line with the demands of a society that is failing morally and spiritually.

What of King Charles' faith?

Although the King has made statements professing to be a loyal Anglican, according to the book 'The Prince and the Paranormal' by John Dale, written in 1986: 'There is evidence that deep inside himself the Prince is a super-ecumenist –

someone who believes that each of the world's religions including Christianity contains a relative truth rather than an absolute one.' In 1985 Charles said in an interview, 'I think Jung makes a great deal of sense in many, many areas and particularly in what is written in the Bible and Indian religions, and in Islam, and many others ... Definitely a pattern develops, where we are all ultimately trying to explore, to go along the same path, to answer the same questions. We all approach from different paths but ultimately the paths meet somewhere in infinity, and that's the important thing.' Sunday Times 18/8/1985.

This is the multi faith idea that every faith alongside Christianity contains a path to God (in other words, all gods are equal). It is the greatest challenge to evangelical Christianity today in countries like Britain. There is evidence that Charles still holds to this belief. So how can he defend the truth of the Gospel which teaches the uniqueness of Jesus Christ and the one way to God through repentance and faith in Him (John 14.6)?

On the Day of the Coronation an article appeared in the Spectator by Quanta Ahmed, 'God Save our Islamophilic King'. She wrote: 'Muslims in Britain and the world over will recognise, in King Charles, a monarch who is deeply Islamophilic (a lover of Islam). He has spoken about his attempts to learn Arabic in order to understand the Quran in its original script. He served as vice-patron of the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies and has spoken

eloquently about Islam and the West, saying the links 'matter more today than ever before'. My mother, who grew up in British India, loves to say that Charles III is essentially Muslim – her logic being one must first be a good Christian before one can be a good Muslim. It's an axiom she remembers from the days of empire before we were being told that we are all engaged in a 'clash of civilisations'. As Charles himself put it: 'that which binds our two worlds together is so much more powerful than that which divides us'.

However the teaching of the Koran denies the centrality of the Gospel message, that the Lord Jesus is Son of God, unique Saviour, who died for our sins and rose from the dead to give us eternal life. As a result Islam is the main persecutor of believing Christians in the world today.

2. What about Queen Camilla?

On a similar subject we have to question Charles' decision to give Camilla the title of Queen and include her in the coronation service (which he has done against the advice of his mother, Queen Elizabeth II). Charles' present marriage to Camilla goes against Jesus' teaching on divorce and remarriage in Matthew 19.3-9, on the grounds of his previous adultery with her.

We note that once before Charles made a solemn vow before God and millions of people, in the marriage service of Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer in 1981. On that occasion he promised

to be faithful to one wife, Diana, till death us do part. Even at the time of his wedding to Diana, he was seeing Camilla and wanting to be with her. This led to the subsequent marriage breakdown, because there were 'three people in that marriage, so it was a bit crowded,' as Diana put it in her famous TV interview.

3. Climate change and world government.

In her book 'Prince Charles – the sustainable Prince', Joan Veon writes, 'Prince Charles has adopted a very radical environmental agenda that calls for a planned society, using the environment and sustainable development as the reason for the change in governance and freedoms.' He endorsed the pivotal World Economic Forum WEF conference in 2020 where its Chairman Klaus Schwab launched the 'Global Reset' agenda, calling for a total reorganisation of our society in order to resolve global crises, in particular the Covid pandemic and the threat of Climate Change.

At the COP 26 UN summit in Glasgow in November 2021 he urged world leaders to take urgent action to combat climate change, saying that time is running out. He called for 'a vast military style campaign to marshal the strength of the global private sector, with trillions at his (or its) disposal far beyond global GDP, and beyond even the governments of the world's leaders. It offers the only real prospect of achieving fundamental economic transition.'

This is a political agenda calling for 'a change in governance' and 'fundamental economic transition'. Now that he is king, Charles may have to give up campaigning for this, but will it still be his aim? Critics of this programme say it will result in the impoverishment of millions of people, the transfer of power from the elected government of individual nations to a form of central government.

An article in the British Church Newspaper by Tony Bennet commented that according to the Bill of Rights which governs the conduct of sovereigns, they must ensure that "no foreign prince, person, prelate, state, or potentate hath, or ought to have, any jurisdiction, power, superiority, pre-eminence, or authority, ecclesiastical or spiritual, within this realm". He concluded by asking, 'So will King Charles use his position of influence to defend our nation from foreign powers that seek to control us, or collaborate with them? Your Majesty! Where are your loyalties? To us? - or to Klaus Schwab and his WEF friends?'

Good question. I did a full length talk on this subject which is available on Light for the Last Days website at <https://rumble.com/v2mv2wi-coronation-thoughts.html>

Historical Postscript.

The rite of Coronation in England, which is really a series of ancient rituals, has its roots in the ninth century and was codified in the fourteenth century in a book called the Liber Regalis. The first king to be crowned

in Westminster Abbey was William the Conqueror in 1066, after the Norman Conquest of England. At that time England was a part of Catholic Europe with allegiance to the Pope. The church ceremony crowning the King or Queen reflected the concept of the divine right of kings, and the connection between the monarch and God.

The English coronation service has a connection to the coronation of the kings of Israel in the Bible. However it is also possible to see a connection to the Roman Empire, with the concept of the emperor as a divine figure, connecting the people to the gods. Octavian, the first Roman Emperor after Julius Caesar, gave himself the name 'Augustus' meaning sacred or exalted. Another title given to Roman Emperors was 'Pontifex Maximus'. On one level this meant he was to defend the bridges (Latin 'pontes') of Rome from attack, but on another that he was a bridge from this world to the gods.

After the fall of the Roman Empire the Pope took on the title of Pontifex Maximus, being seen as the bridge to God for the Roman Catholic world. Kings of Europe like Charlemagne pledged allegiance to the Pope, who had power over them. In this way a form of the Roman Empire continued under the papacy, as the kings of Europe enforced the rule of Roman Catholicism over Europe. This became a false church, which suppressed true Christianity, the knowledge of the Bible and persecuted the Jewish people.

When Henry VIII broke with Rome in 1534 he placed himself as head of

the Church of England. The Church of England then became a Protestant Church with the sovereign later established as the 'Defender of the Protestant Faith.' Today the monarch has the title of Supreme governor of the Church of England.

The problem with all this is that Jesus is the head of the true church and the job of 'defending the faith' can only be carried out by true believers in Him. There is no guarantee that the monarch will be a believer in Jesus Christ. The New Testament does not teach that the church and the state should be united. In fact as the history of Europe under Roman Catholicism has shown this is a recipe for corruption in the church and abuse of power by its Popes and ministers. The Reformers saw the Pope as Antichrist and the Church of Rome as Babylon the Great (see Revelation 17).

New Testament teaching tells us to pray for the government, that we may live a peaceable life, (1 Timothy 2.1-6). We are also told to obey the government (Romans 13), except when it causes us to do something contrary to scripture. The implication of this is that the church and the state should be separate. This was one of the issues which the Protestant Reformation struggled with, as did secularists in the French Revolution. Britain is actually the last country in Europe to retain a link between church and state in the position given to the King or Queen as head of the church in the coronation.

When will He come?

A Study in the timing of the Rapture



As the world gets darker and people run out of hope that anyone can fix the mess humans have made of our earth, there is one hope that remains fixed and certain for believers in the Lord as we look *'for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.'* Titus 2.11-14.

When this happens the Bible tells us that a large number of people will suddenly be taken out of the world:

'I tell you on that night two people will be in one bed; one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding grain together; one will be taken and the other left. Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left.' Luke 17.34-36.

In 1 Thessalonians 4.16-17, Paul describes it like this:

'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.'

The people who will be caught up to meet the Lord are those who believe that the Lord Jesus died for our sins and rose again from the dead. This event is known as the rapture of the church. The word 'rapture' is taken from the Latin form of the Greek word 'harpazo' used in 1 Thessalonians 4.17 for 'caught up'.

This experience is offered to all those who repent of sin and accept Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord. Those who do so will then experience the most dramatic life-changing event of all time. We will receive new resurrection bodies which will never get old and never again experience sin, sickness and death (1 Corinthians 15.50-58). We will meet the Lord Jesus in the air and He will take us to heaven. From this time onwards, we will be forever in His presence.

We will pass before the judgement seat of Christ where our works done on earth will be judged. *'For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.'* 2 Corinthians 5.10. This judgement will be for reward not for heaven or hell.

We will attend the wonderful event known as the 'Marriage Supper of the Lamb' (Revelation 19.6-10) where the Lord and all those who have been

saved through the ages will be present. For those who have this hope based on a living faith in Jesus as Saviour and Lord there is a future which is so wonderful that no words can describe it: *'Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.'* I Corinthians 2.9.

Those taken in the rapture of the church, along with those who died in Christ between the Day of Pentecost and the rapture, will return with Jesus Christ in glorified bodies and be part of the glorious time when Jesus reigns on earth in the Millennial kingdom and then live forever in the new heavens and new earth.

When does this happen?

This is the most debated question concerning the second coming. The issue is whether the rapture happens before, in the middle of or at the end of the Great Tribulation. The Great Tribulation is the time of trouble on earth in the final seven years before the physical return of Jesus to the earth. Briefly there are three views.

1. The pre-tribulation rapture. This teaches that before the 7 year period of the rule of the Antichrist and the Great Tribulation begins, the believing church will be caught away (raptured) in fulfilment of the above passages.

2. The mid-tribulation rapture. This teaches that this event occurs midway through the Great Tribulation and rule of the Antichrist (i.e.

after three and a half years of the tribulation). A variation on this view, the pre-wrath rapture puts the event about three quarters of the way through the tribulation.

3. The post- tribulation rapture. This teaches that this event occurs at the end of the Great Tribulation, simultaneously with the coming of the Lord to the earth.

If we believe the first of these options, it means that we should be ready for the rapture to happen at any time now. If not the rapture cannot happen until the revelation of the Antichrist (Mid tribulation view) or the final event of the tribulation period (post tribulation view).

The pre-tribulation rapture.

1. Imminence.

There are a number of scriptures which imply that the rapture event could come at any time, unexpectedly. In Matthew 24.37-42 Jesus implies that life will be going on as normal with people doing everyday things like eating and drinking, buying and selling, when suddenly one shall be taken and one shall be left. One of the images Jesus uses is 'the thief in the night' who comes unannounced to take away that which is of value to Him. In this case the rapture could come at any time now.

But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to

be broken into. Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect. Matthew 24.43-44.

But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labour pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. 1 Thessalonians 5.1-4.

2. Saved from wrath.

There are promises to believers which have been interpreted to mean that the faithful church will not see the wrath of God and will be spared the end time tribulation.

Paul told the Thessalonian Christians to *'wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come. ... For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.'* 1 Thessalonians 1.10 and 5.9.

Luke 21.34-36 *'But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch therefore, and pray always*

that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.' The snare which comes on unbelievers is equated with the seven year tribulation period, meaning that true believers will be taken out before the tribulation.

A similar thought is contained in Revelation 3.10 *'Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.'* The hour of trial to test the whole world sounds like the Great Tribulation period.

3. Taken out of the way.

For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming. 2 Thessalonians 2.7-8. This has been interpreted to mean that the Spirit filled church will be taken out of the way before the lawless one (Antichrist) can be revealed.

After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this." Revelation 4.1.

This section of Revelation begins with John being taken out of this

world to heaven where it is revealed to him what will happen during the Great Tribulation. It is said that just as John was taken up into heaven before receiving the revelation about the tribulation, so the church will be taken up into heaven before it happens. There is no mention of the church as such from Revelation 6 onwards, but frequent mention in chapters 2-3.

4. Daniel 9.24-27.

Daniel is given a revelation of 70 weeks of years (i.e. 70 x 7 years) which will begin with the command to rebuild Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity and end with all prophecy being fulfilled (verse 24). This is divided into three sections, 7 x 7 years + 62 x 7 years + 1 x 7 years. After the 7 + 62 x 7 years (= 483 years) Messiah is cut off (dies a violent death) after which the city of Jerusalem and the Temple are destroyed.

“And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; and the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary.” Daniel 9.26.

This fits in with the events of the crucifixion of Jesus and the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple by the Romans 40 years later. In his book ‘The Coming Prince’ Sir Robert Anderson worked out that the crucifixion took place 483 Hebrew years after the command to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem as given in Nehemiah 2.

This leaves one period of seven years unaccounted for. This seven year

period deals with the Antichrist and the abomination of desolation (see Matthew 24.15).

‘Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; but in the middle of the week he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, even until the consummation, which is determined, is poured out on the desolate.’ Daniel 9.27

There is a gap of around 2000 years between the fulfilment of verse 26 and the future fulfilment of verse 27. Verse 26 deals with the sacrificial death of the Messiah and the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem by the Romans in AD 70. Verse 27 with the last 7 years before the end of this age. This begins with a covenant (peace treaty) signed between Israel and the Antichrist and ends with the consummation (determined end / judgment) being poured out on the desolate (or desolator), the one responsible for the abomination of desolation (see Matthew 24.15).

The explanation for this interval of 2000 years is that the ‘Church Age’, beginning at Pentecost (Acts 2, the birth of the church) and ending with the rapture of the church, is omitted. The church age was not revealed to Daniel and therefore not included in this prophecy which deals exclusively with God’s purposes for the redemption of Israel. After the rapture of the church it is then taught that the elect of the Jewish people become the agents of salvation during the tribulation period. Revelation 7 describes 144,000 from

the tribes of Israel who hold forth the Gospel message and bring a great multitude to faith in Jesus. This period ends with the fulfilment of Jewish hopes when Jesus comes again to rescue the remnant of Israel at the end of the tribulation (Zechariah 12.10, 14.3)

5. The tribulation saints.

In Revelation 20.4 we are told about those who were martyred for their faith during the tribulation period (see Revelation 6.9-11, 7.13-17). *Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.*

They are resurrected during the millennium. Why do this group specifically need to be resurrected at this time? They are not the only martyrs in church history. The answer according to this view is that those who were believers before the rapture and those who died beforehand have already been caught up to meet the Lord as He came in the air (1 Thessalonians 4.13-18). They will return to earth with the Lord in resurrection bodies to take part in the Millennial (1000 years) kingdom. The people referred to in Revelation 20.4 became Christians after the rapture. Therefore they missed it. They were then martyred or died during the tribulation. As believers therefore they have a place in the world to come and need to be resurrected.

6. In the air or to the earth?

There are passages which speak of the Lord coming in the air to gather together believers and take them to heaven (John 14.1-3, 1 Thessalonians 4.13-5.11) and passages which speak of the Lord coming to the earth with the believers (saints) (Zechariah 14.3, Revelation 19.11-16). It is reasonable to believe that He cannot do both at the same time, so there has to be some difference between the two events.

The mid-tribulation rapture.

According to this view the church will go through the first half of the tribulation (3 ½ years) but not the second half, which is the more severe part. Some scriptures used for this view are these:

1. The apostasy and the antichrist.

Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come. Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. 2 Thessalonians 2.1-4.

This is said to mean that the apostasy (falling away from the faith) and the

revelation of the man of sin (Antichrist) have to come before the rapture of the church. Therefore believers will see the first part of Antichrist's reign (the first 3 ½ years while he is gaining power) but not the second part (the 3 ½ years of great tribulation following the 'abomination of desolation'.)

Note. One possibility is that the word used for the falling away (Greek apostasia), can also mean a departure in the sense of moving from one place to another. All early translations of the Bible until the King James Version translated this verse as departure rather than apostasy. In this case this is a statement of the pre-tribulation rapture. The departure (rapture) comes first then the man of sin is revealed.

2. The wrath in the second half of the tribulation.

The word 'wrath' is used of the tribulation period and used of the bowl judgements, the third sevenfold series of disasters in Revelation 16, but not of the first and second series, the seal (Revelation 6-7) and the trumpets (Revelation 8-11). It is therefore suggested that Christians will go through the first part of the great tribulation but not through the worst part which is the expression of divine wrath.

The post tribulation rapture.

This view means that the rapture and the second coming to earth of the Lord are simultaneous events. It also means that the church will go through the whole of the Great Tribulation and

should be ready for this.

1. After the tribulation.

This is the main verse that is used to promote this view: *"Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.* Matthew 24.29-31.

It is said that verse 31 when the Lord gathers his elect is the same event as the rapture of 1 Thessalonians 4. In this case the rapture definitely happens at the end after the last event of the tribulation, the darkness on the earth. So there is no point in looking for the rapture until all the events of the tribulation have taken place.

Pre-tribulationists argue that this 'gathering together of his elect' is about the final ingathering of the saved of Israel, prior to their going into the restored Israel of the millennial kingdom.

2. What did the early church teach?

It is claimed that early church teaching was that the church would face the Antichrist and will go through the

Great Tribulation. On the other hand we don't have a complete record of what the early church taught. Quite a lot of pre-millennial teaching was deliberately destroyed after Origen and Augustine taught an allegorical interpretation of prophecy. Some of the things early church teachers taught about the end of days have been shown to be incorrect, like the view that after the fall of the Roman Empire, the 10 kings of Revelation 17 would arise immediately and come together under the Antichrist, after which the last battle would take place and Christ would return.

Also there are reference to the pre-tribulation rapture in earlier writings, including the writings of Ephraim the Syrian in about 373 AD: 'For all the saints and Elect of God are gathered prior to the tribulation that is to come, and are taken to the Lord lest they see the confusion that is to overwhelm the world because of our sins.' 'On the Last Times'.

3. An escape clause for soft western Christians?

The pre-tribulation rapture is considered by some to be an escape clause for soft western Christians who can't face suffering for their faith. Many Christians living in lands of persecution and war are already suffering tribulation.

4. Who are the persecuted saints in Revelation?

Where do the great multitude of saints

in Revelation 7 come from if the church has disappeared? Who is Antichrist going to persecute? *'It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them.'* Revelation 13. The church must be present during the tribulation for these scriptures to be fulfilled. The alternative view is that these saints are those who come to faith in Jesus after the rapture of the church, who are the subject of Revelation 7, the great number who 'come out of the great tribulation'. Revelation 7.14.

5. The Greek word 'parousia'

The word 'parousia' used for the coming of the Lord for his saints is compared to the use of the word to describe the visit of a king or important person to one of his cities. He would be met by a group of his officials and relatives outside the city. They who would then accompany him in procession into the city to be seen by the resident population. The comparison is that the rapture of the church will happen at the time of the Lord's return to earth, when believers still alive at the time will be taken out of the world to meet Him and accompany Him back to earth. The two events would follow each other immediately therefore the rapture of the church (believers meeting the Lord in the air) will be immediately followed by his coming to earth with these saints to be visible to all its inhabitants.

Conclusion

Christians who hold different views

on this subject should avoid breaking fellowship and denouncing each other. Personally I accept view one (pre tribulation rapture) although I note that some of the arguments for a post tribulation rapture do make sense. A few general points I would make in conclusion are these.

If the rapture does happen unexpectedly and people remain on the earth after it has happened it would cause a tremendous amount of questioning, which would presumably lead many to look into the Bible and discover what had happened. It is likely that they would then become believers and tell others what had happened with the result that there would be a large remnant of people who would turn to Jesus Christ. This would be likely to include many Jews who would have understanding from the Old Testament anyway. It is not impossible therefore to see a large movement of people coming to faith in Jesus as Saviour and Lord after the church has been removed, as in Revelation 7. These would be the ones the Antichrist persecutes in Revelation 13.

We should live as though Christ could come at any time and or that we will go to be with Him in death, which could also come at any time. Therefore we should separate ourselves from the evil influences of this age. We should also use the time that remains to get the message of the Gospel out so that as many people as possible can find salvation in Jesus Christ. At the same time we recognise that since the event has not yet happened we cannot be

totally sure about the details of how and when it happens. So we should also accept that we may be called to suffer and die for our faith in the tribulation time. We should also remember that whatever our view on this subject all unbelievers who survive until this time will go through the tribulation and so we should be warning them to 'flee the wrath to come' by believing in Jesus as Saviour and Lord.

We should not divide over this issue, remembering that whatever our view of the timing of the rapture, we agree that there is one way of salvation through repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Finally we should not ignore the subject. When he introduced the subject in I Thessalonians 4.13 Paul wrote: ***But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren.*** We have a great number of ignorant brethren who know little or nothing about this subject, which is a great shame, because it is there in a number of passages in the Word of God. So don't be taken by surprise, but listen to Jesus' word: ***'Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.'*** Matthew 24.44 ***'Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.'*** Matthew 25.13. ***'When these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near.'*** Luke 21.28

Signs of the Times



Whose world order?

The world today is in the grip of a conflict between powerful forces seeking to gain control of the levers of power. On the one hand we have the USA / NATO / EU alliance, which are increasingly influenced by globalist organisations wanting to bring in the World Economic Forum's (WEF) Great Reset and UN Agenda 30. This aims at control of the world's economy, food and energy, which will be limited to meet the needs of the zero carbon climate change agenda. On the other hand we have a growing alliance of nations around Russia, China and Iran that hope to replace the western dominated power system with their own version of a new world order. In January 2022 Vladimir Putin and Xi Jinping met in China to share their vision for a new world order, no longer dominated by the West. "The world is going through momentous changes," their joint statement said, noting the "transformation of the global governance architecture and world order." Vladimir Putin gave a speech in Moscow on October 27 2022 in which he said Russia's invasion of Ukraine will "accelerate" the inauguration of a "new world order based on law and justice" in which economic and political gains will justify the losses sustained thus far. Putin claims he had to go into Ukraine to defend Russia from the NATO / EU advance into what it regards as its

sphere of influence. Russia's fear was that the western alliance intended to use Ukraine as a springboard to break up Russia and absorb it into the western based globalist order. This was not actually a baseless fear (although nothing justifies Putin's invasion of Ukraine).

Russia is working to resist this NATO / EU advance by building up its partnership with China and its BRICS allies (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) in order to build up a power centre to rival and defeat US based power system. Part of this plan involves removing the dollar as the world's reserve currency, and changing the petrodollar system whereby oil and gas purchases on the world market are made using dollars. This would involve a new system of exchange based on China, with Russia, Iran and the BRICS nations in tow. It will be based on membership of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, the Eurasian Economic Union, and BRICS, all of which are dominated by China. This economic alliance which would make its currency the yuan equal or more powerful than the dollar in world trading terms.

UK Prime Minister, Rishi Sunak, said at a meeting of the G7 in Hiroshima that China now poses the chief threat to the world order. He is right in this. China's goal is to take world leadership. It is achieving this by beefing up its military

and threatening not just Taiwan, but all of the South East Asia region. It is increasing its involvement in the Middle East, where it has concluded a reconciliation agreement between Iran and Saudi Arabia. It is proposing a peace agreement for Israel and the Palestinians also as well as working on a peace plan for Yemen. It is also increasing its influence in Africa and South America.

Russia is increasingly dependent on China as western sanctions harm its economy. China is gaining increasing influence in the former Soviet Central Asian republics. On May 19 Chinese President Xi Jinping unveiled a grand plan for Central Asia's development, from building infrastructure to boosting trade, taking on a new leadership role in a region that was part of the Soviet Union and inside Russia's sphere of influence. China is also opening Russia's far east port, Vladivostok, as a transit hub for its goods. This is seen as a move towards restoring Russia's Far East to Chinese domination. The area around Vladivostok was ceded by China to Russia in 1860. Ironically while Putin is wasting thousands of Russian lives in Ukraine trying to shore up Russia's sphere of influence in Europe, he is losing Central Asia and Russia's Far East to China.

Both Russia and China are following an anti-Christian dictatorial path.

Putin allows the Russian Orthodox Church to flourish, on the condition that it continues to be a pro-

government organisation in the hands of its Patriarch Kiril. He is an ex KGB operative who justified Soviet persecution of evangelical Christians. The Russian Orthodox Church has a long history of suppressing biblical Christianity in Russia and extreme anti-Semitism. Putin's policy is to suppress all religious groups apart from the Orthodox Church. Seven years ago, he ratified the 'Yarovaya Law' requiring all religious organizations and churches in Russia to register with the Russian government. Banning "missionary activities" and even answering questions about religion outside of state-approved premises, the law has been used to persecute members of many religions, particularly Evangelicals and Baptists. As a result Russia is back to Soviet era suppression of all Christian groups, apart from the Orthodox Church, and suppresses and imprisons or kills vocal critics of the regime. Russia is bringing this suppression of non Orthodox religious groups into areas of Ukraine it controls.

China is stepping up its control over Christianity and all religions. The Chinese government recently published a draft version of the 2023 "Administrative Measures for Religious Activity Venues," a set of restrictions on religion that are even tighter than the 2005 rules they will supersede.

All religious organisations will now be required to demonstrate they "support the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, and support the socialist system," and "carry out in-depth implementation of Xi Jinping

Thought” to maintain their license to operate. Xi Jinping Thought has been written into the Chinese constitution and incorporated into the Chinese Communist Party’s rulebook, to the exclusion of all other ideologies. Xi Jinping Thought is mandatory reading for schoolchildren and taught in college as though it were a great work of literature.

The new regulations require religious institutions to embrace “Sinicization,” which means hollowing out the religion and replacing it with Chinese Communist Party dogma. “Note that it is not enough to refrain from dissent. Places of worship, whose ‘liquidation’ is made quicker and easier, should actively preach ‘love for the motherland, and support for the leadership of the CCP and the socialist system,’” observed Bitter Winter, an organisation supporting Chinese Christians.

It is not just Christians who are affected by these laws. All houses of worship are required to promote the “national language,” a clear burden on groups like the Tibetan Buddhists and Uyghur Muslims. In those restless areas, religious institutions will be required to preach “national consciousness, civic awareness, awareness of the rule of law, the correct distinction between ethnic customs and religious beliefs, and shall not use religion to interfere with administrative, judicial, educational and social life.”

All foreign individuals and organisations are banned from “spreading religious content online.”

Parents in the city of Wenzhou were ordered to sign documents renouncing their religious faith in order to keep their children in school. Communist Party authorities in Henan province, China, mandated that anyone seeking to attend a church service must fill out a form and get government approval every time they would like to go to church.

In Daniel 11.36-39 there is a passage which speaks of the coming antichrist:

“Then the king shall do according to his own will: he shall exalt and magnify himself above every god, shall speak blasphemies against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the wrath has been accomplished; for what has been determined shall be done. He shall regard neither the God of his fathers nor the desire of women, nor regard any god; for he shall exalt himself above them all. But in their place he shall honour a god of fortresses; and a god which his fathers did not know he shall honour with gold and silver, with precious stones and pleasant things. Thus he shall act against the strongest fortresses with a foreign god, which he shall acknowledge, and advance its glory; and he shall cause them to rule over many, and divide the land for gain.”

LGBT Pride – a new religion.

This article is largely based on a discussion with Matthew Roberts on the Christian Institute website. www.christian.org.uk

Pride Month, celebrated in June has

become a cultural phenomenon with LGBT Pride flags adorning businesses, government offices, schools and universities, even some churches. Socially you may meet disapproval if you question this and expressions of dissent or disapproval may cost you your job. It is approved and enforced by government and royalty, as the Houses of Parliament were lit up with pride colours, as was Windsor Castle at the concert celebrating the coronation of King Charles III.

Matthew Roberts, author of the book 'Pride, Identity and Worship of Self' claims this is now becoming a religious movement which people are required to bow down to. Its Pride Marches are like the religious processions in medieval times, that celebrated events in the Christian calendar. It has its own sacred language which you must use when discussing its issues. Use the wrong language and you may face criticism and rejection. It has its dogmas which you are required to believe, showing a new view of how society should be understood and a new moral code which you must conform to. It is developing a kind of blasphemy law that criminalises anyone who speaks against its lifestyle or tries to persuade someone to leave it. Christian preachers who describe homosexual practice or sexual activity outside of heterosexual marriage as sinful are particularly guilty of doing this.

According to the Pride movement you can choose your religion, but you can't change your sexuality. Your identity as a gay man or woman defines who you

are and anyone who does not accept this is guilty of a hate crime, which is equal to rejecting someone on the basis of their race.

Matthew Roberts claims that this new religion is based on the worship of Self. This means people have the right to define who they are and what they do and no one has the right to question this. This affects much more than the small percentage of people who identify as homosexual. It's about a universal belief that everyone must be free to indulge their own sexual desires and other kinds of desires they find in their hearts. 'Follow your heart' is one of the great mantras of the age as Disney reminds us.

If you conclude that 'Self is king, the Self is god,' you move to the next step which is that you must serve 'self' to find fulfilment and happiness. There must be no constraints on a person's freedom to choose their path to fulfilment, especially those put on them by society or religion (Christianity in particular). In this way of thinking I can only be fulfilled and happy when anything that might stop me doing what I want to do is taken away.

However the self is not God. Because this whole construct is not based on a true account of what a human being is, there are some serious destructive effects of all this. When we violate the restraining influence of conscience and the commands which the real God has put in place to save us from the sin nature within us, we open ourselves up to a destructive power which we

are seeing manifest in our society today. Nothing illustrates this more clearly than the trans movement which is teaching children to do permanent damage to their bodies. These ignore the obvious physical realities that boys and girls, men and women are different, and that nothing can change those differences which are built into our bodies and minds from birth.



A man cannot become a woman and a woman cannot become a man. And yet it is becoming virtually a criminal offence to express this view which has been held by all societies at all times until now. As a result we have children being placed on damaging untested puberty blockers, young people going through irreversible surgeries that sterilise and mutilate their bodies. If they later come to the conclusion that they made a mistake and want to go back to what they originally were they find it is no longer possible.

This is the result of a false religion that blinds people's eyes and makes people in power today approve procedures which previous generations would have considered to be criminal. The underlying assumption behind all of this is that you are defined by your feeling. That's been deeply embedded

by the Gay Pride movement since its inception back in the 1970s. It came out of the sexual revolution of the 1960s, which in itself came out of humanist philosophy which has been developed over the past 150 years before that. This shifts the centre of our lives away from God our Maker onto our human identity. We must be free to choose who we are and how we live with no restraining influence, especially from God and the Bible.

As a result we now have sex education in schools which is encouraging children to experiment with all kinds of sexual behaviours, with no restraining influence. We have Drag Queens being invited to tell stories to children which will reinforce the LGBT / free sex view. Children are being encouraged to experiment with different sexual behaviours and having their resistance to sexual advances from others lowered.

So Self defines everything. Goodness is defined by what I want. Nothing becomes right or wrong. There is no place for vows of fidelity between a husband and wife. We also find that language itself is being changed to fit in with the new realities they are thrusting upon us. We are being told to use words we know are wrong, like saying 'he' when talking about a woman who wants to be considered a man or 'they' when you are talking about one person not several people. One of the insights George Orwell brought out in his futuristic novel 1984 was the potential for changing the language of a people (Newspeak) as a means to control their thinking and

indoctrinate them with a totalitarian world view that they must submit to.

Major denominations of the church, Church of England, Church of Scotland, Methodist Church, have all fallen into line with Pride ideology. Pride plays on Christian ideas of compassion and the idea of all people being equal in sight of God and then turns them upside down. The Pride movement's deity is Your Self whose desires you must follow, doing what your heart tells you to do. The Bible tells us that our heart is deceitful and desperately corrupt and we need to repent of the sin that traps us in the grip of a fallen human nature in rebellion against God. The Lord Jesus Christ has come to free us from the things that we naturally want to do and to transform us by his spirit. He is able to forgive us for our sins through the blood of the cross so that we can become the people God wants us to be.

Pride has its own gospel and it's the opposite of the Christian one. Rather than set you free from your naturally corrupt desires to enable you to follow the laws of God, it's the laws of God and the traditional moral values of society you need to be set free from. They're the problem. Once we're rescued from God's commands, which are terribly bad for us, we are set free to indulge our sinful desires. This is the exact opposite of the Gospel, so we've got two different gods, two different gospels.

Pride is exactly the right word for all this because in Christian theology all that's gone wrong with the world is the result of Satan's original sin of pride, in

which he sought to put himself in the place of God. This is described in two passages in the Hebrew prophets, in Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28.

Ezekiel 28 begins with a rebuke to the King of Tyre:

"In the pride of your heart you say, 'I am a god; I sit on the throne of a god in the heart of the seas.' But you are a mere mortal and not a god, though you think you are as wise as a god.

Ezekiel 28.1

Therefore thus says the Lord God: "Because you have set your heart as the heart of a god, behold, therefore, I will bring strangers against you, the most terrible of the nations; and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of your wisdom, and defile your splendour. They shall throw you down into the Pit, and you shall die the death of the slain in the midst of the seas."

Ezekiel 28.11-19 goes on to show that behind the King of Tyre is one we can recognise as Satan. Tyre was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar and by Alexander the Great, as this prophecy said it would be. So western society is on the way to destruction as God's judgement falls in the last days' Great Tribulation, before the Second Coming of Christ. The only way to be saved from this is to repent and believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Matthew Roberts' book 'Pride, Identity and Worship of Self' is available from <https://www.christianfocus.com>

Conclusion



All the things that we write of in this magazine are pointers to the fulfilment of Bible prophecies of the last days in our day and the soon coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The most important thing we can do, in the light of this, is to call on the name of the Lord for salvation, so we are ready to meet Him at His coming.

Dear Heavenly Father, I admit that I am a sinner and need your forgiveness. I believe that Jesus the Messiah died in my place, shedding His blood to pay for my sins, and that He rose again from the dead to give me eternal life. I am willing right now to turn from my sin and accept Jesus the Messiah as my personal Saviour and Lord. I commit my life to you and ask you to send the Holy Spirit into my life, to fill me and to take control and to help me become the kind of person you want me to be.

Thank you Father for loving me.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

For further information, please write to:

**Tony Pearce,
Light for the Last Days,
Box BM - 4226, London, WC1N 3XX**

Email: **enquiries@lightforthelastdays.co.uk**

Website: **<http://www.lightforthelastdays.co.uk>**