

CUTTING EDGE CAMELOT, No 206

Sunday 7th May 2023

‘Virtually Church but with some way to go...’

Welcome

Welcome to Cutting Edge Camelot on this Coronation Sunday. We include in this edition an explanation of the key aspects of Saturday’s coronation service along with scripture readings and Ron’s reflection.

Scripture Passages

1 Kings 3: 5-10

At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, “Ask what I should give you.”

⁶ And Solomon said, “You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you; and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love, and have given him a son to sit on his throne today. ⁷ And now, O LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. ⁸ And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people, so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. ⁹ Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil; for who can govern this your great people?”

¹⁰ It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this.

Ephesians 3: 14-21

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, ¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. ¹⁶ I pray that, according to the

riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, ¹⁷ and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. ¹⁸ I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, ¹⁹ and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

²⁰ Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, ²¹ to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Aspects of the Coronation

The Oath

The King's spiritual preparation for the coronation ceremony and the promises he was to make began several weeks ago as he followed a daily routine of prayer and study of the scriptures.

Over the centuries the words used in the Oath have changed but always include promises that he will lead well, and promises to God to do this as well as he can. King Charles placed his hand on the Holy Bible and said, "The things which I have here before promised, I will perform and keep, "So help me God." The King then signed the oath, promising to serve God, the people, and rule according to the law.

In 1969 at his investiture as Prince of Wales he made a similar oath when his mother the late Queen took his hands in hers as he pledged to be her liege man of life and limb. He has honoured this pledge for over 50 years and described that occasion as a "proud moving and humbling experience".

And last year, on his ascension to the throne he said "I promise to serve you with loyalty, respect and love".

The Bible details many promises or covenants made between God and people. God's words are trustworthy and true. We can rely on Him to keep His promises.

We pray that our King never forgets that within his oath he acknowledged that he can only be a good King and remain true to his word with the help of God. Help him to remain close to God at all times and seasons in his reign. We pray for ourselves too that when we make promises, we take them seriously and with the right heart; that our words and actions are aligned, and our lives are lived out in closeness with God.

The Investiture

The monarch was presented with several significant items. They include:

The Sovereign's Orb: a golden orb with a cross on the top, that the King holds in his right hand represents the world and shows that the King has power, influence and responsibility over the world.

The Sovereign's Sceptres; there are several sceptres which represent the King's authority, one has a dove representing the Holy Spirit, known as the Rod of Equity and Mercy demonstrates the sovereign's spiritual power, but the sceptre used at the coronation had a globe with a cross on the top to represent his earthly authority under God.

St. Edwards Crown; the arches of the crown form the shape of a cross above the King's head and above this is mounted a further globe and cross.

Significantly all three items contain a cross, the most important symbol in Christianity. They all signify elements of the reign of a King – his power, influence, responsibility, authority, wisdom and love. King Charles is not on his own in his position of power, ultimately the earth is God's and God requires the King to humble himself beneath His authority, so that he can help him in his many rolls and duties as our King. James 4:10 says, 'Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up'.

When asked about his investiture as the Prince of Wales he said “I could be cynical and say it was just a big show for television, but I like to think it was more than that”.

The King’s love of nature, his work to protect the environment, and the formation of the Princes’ Trust are a few examples of ways he has used his position as Prince of Wales to serve his people, this country and the wider world.

We pray that as King, Charles will continue to seek to lead wisely, use his position for the benefit of all and reflect God’s love. We also pray for ourselves that we will be wise stewards of all that God has given us, and use our time and talents to serve others to the glory of God the Father.

The Anointing

The anointing is the central part of the coronation ceremony, considered so sacred that it was not televised at the last coronation.

The King, sat in the Coronation Chair, was anointed with Chrism oil, a very special and holy oil, made from olives from Jerusalem and infused with spices and perfumes. The Archbishop of Canterbury made the shape of a cross upon King Charles’ head, chest and hands.

Being anointed with oil blesses and ‘sets the King apart’ for his role. It’s a very personal and private moment and is usually done under a special cloth canopy demonstrating the fact that the anointing, unlike the rest of the ceremony, is a special moment between the King and God alone.

We see anointing with oil in the Old Testament of the Bible, when people are ‘set apart’ by God for a particular task. This is a sacramental act and an important and powerful moment that has similarities with when Christians are baptised, confirmed or ordained.

We pray that filled with the Holy Spirit, King Charles III will submit to God’s rule in his life and serve Him all the days of his life. We pray also that God may shape our intentions, our thoughts and our actions, set us apart, and use us for His work.

Reflection

Yesterday our King was crowned, and I hope you all got the opportunity to watch it. Apart from the atmosphere, I think we did better to watch on TV than to be in the Abbey - the last Coronation was in grainy black and white and only nine inches wide. A coronation is meant to be a spectacle, but it goes on a bit, and in the pub there was a TV the size of a door.

The Crown Jewels got their first proper airing for more than seventy years. The Children's Society owns a set of replicas of the Crown Jewels which they exhibit for fundraising, and when I was curate in Weston-super-Mare, I got to look after them for a couple of days between shows. Did I get them out of the boxes and try them on? What do you think?

Anyway, every part of the service carries significance. All that regalia and ritual has a purpose, and the commentators did a grand job of explaining it. But some of it strikes me as specially important. The King was given a ring, with a cross on it, the orb, with a cross on it, the sceptre, with a cross on it, and of course, the crown, with a cross on it. What is this trying to tell us?

The ring is a mark of identity. Rings have always been that. Signet rings have initials engraved, or coats of arms, saying who they belong to. The King's ring identifies him as a Christian monarch. Back in the days when a monarch would offer some grovelling peasant his hand to kiss, said peasant was made aware that he was really paying homage to God, and the king was just his representative.

The orb represents the world, being a globe, and although the King gets to hold it, he is reminded by the cross that the whole world is really God's own, and kings just get to rule over a little bit, for a little while. It's God who has the whole world in his hand, and don't you forget it.

The sceptre began as a club to hit people with, but the cross on top means that this sort of power and judgement belongs rightly only to God, and the King holds it on his behalf.

And the crown itself, encrusted with huge jewels, is topped by a cross - all the King's authority is given him by God, to be used for his kingdom. All the symbols of the King's authority hammer home the fact that he is King, but God is King of Kings. And we know that Charles, like his mother, has a strong Christian faith and understands that.

An important part of the ceremony was the anointing. It's so important, that it happened out of sight, behind those special screens with a tree on. It's a holy thing. This goes back long before coronations. Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anointed Solomon king. Solomon wasn't crowned, but that anointing marked him out as chosen by God to be king of Israel. Back in the 12th Century, we had a civil war between the supporters of Stephen and Mathilda, who both had a claim to the throne of England. Stephen was crowned, but Mathilda arrived while he was in prison, and she was the granddaughter of William I, and she wanted to be crowned. But the church wouldn't have it, and no bishop would do it, because Stephen had been anointed, and that trumped crowning.

Solomon maybe hadn't expected to become King. He wasn't David's oldest son. But he was his father's choice, and so he was anointed. Some of our kings, like Henry VIII, Charles I and George V all became king against their expectations because their older brothers either died or abdicated. We never had a King Arthur, or a Henry IX. Solomon realised he'd had kingship thrust upon him, and that he was no more ready to be king than anybody else, so he famously prayed to God to give him the wisdom he would need. "I'm a child," he admitted. "Give me the wisdom to decide between good and evil. How else can I rule over this great people of yours?" Our King has been heir apparent since he was three, too young to understand what he was being brought up to. And I think we should all be praying that our King

Charles III will be given wisdom too. It isn't that he's not reasonably wise already, but someone in his position needs a special form of wisdom, because he's so much in the public eye, and people will look up to him and hang on his words, and expect him to have wisdom and common sense.

Because although we have a King who reigns, but who rules through parliament, he still needs wisdom. Mentioning no names, but members of his family have done some fairly stupid things by way of interviews when if they'd had wiser friends to advise them they might have kept quiet. King Charles doesn't make laws, but he signs them off, so he needs to be aware of what's going on - what's being done in his name. And it's why we pray for our politicians, the parliamentarians who really do make the laws. They need wisdom too, and when they don't show it, don't we know it?

We know our king has concerns about all sorts of issues, environmental matters, world politics and the welfare of young people, to name just a few. When he was Prince of Wales, he was freer to speak out than he perhaps is now, but we know where his heart is. Incidentally, he's often been laughed at for talking to plants. What actually happened was a journalist asked him if he talked to his plants, and he laughed and said yes. It was a joke.

The good works he started will continue now he's King, even if the Prince's Trust might have to find a new name. He was a good prince, and with God's help he'll be a good king. Yesterday he put himself in God's hands, and in our prayers, week on week, we'll hold him there. And always be praying wholeheartedly, "God save the King".

Ron

Points for Prayers

- Prayers for King Charles for wisdom and compassion in the way he reigns and for the support of the rest of the Royal Family

- For community and village events to celebrate the Coronation
- Resolution to industrial disputes especially in the healthcare sector
- Conflict between Russia and the Ukraine and those who are refugees from this conflict
- Those whom we know who are facing illnesses of all kinds and have recently been bereaved
- For Elliscombe House in Higher Holton and its residents
- For teachers, children and parents of North Cadbury church school

Hymn

A hymn sung at the coronation is 'Christ is made the sure foundation.'

Services for this week and next

Sunday 7 th May	9.00 am Communion, Yarlington
Sunday 7 th May	9.30 am Coronation Service, North Cheriton
Sunday 7 th May	11.00 am Coronation Service, North Cadbury
Sunday 14 th May	9.30 am Communion, Galhampton
Sunday 14 th May	9.30 am Communion, North Cheriton
Sunday 14 th May	9.30 am Matins, Blackford
Sunday 14 th May	11.00 am Sunday Worship, Holton

Excalibur

Excalibur is back in paper form. It contains details of Camelot people, a record of baptisms, weddings and funerals undertaken through the church in the Camelot Parishes. The May edition of Excalibur has now been published online at camelotparishes.co.uk.

The Parish Office

If Rob is not in the Office during normal office hours please contact him via email (office@camelotparishes.org.uk) or on 01749 850934.

Growing as a worshipper, a servant and a family

*We pray that 'we might live in love,
as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us'*

(Ephesians 5: 2)