

Britain in Danger

An analysis of the spiritual state of Britain. The Church, a faithful remnant, is encouraged to intercede for Britain, if only for the sake of Britain's children

1. God and the Nations

Is God concerned with nations today, in the 'church age'? After all, the NT seems to concentrate on *personal salvation* in contrast to the emphasis on *nations* that we find in the OT. Consider:

- "He rules over the nations" (Ps 22.28)(2 Chron 20.6). Obviously true in OT times, but there is no reason to suppose that His rule over nations stopped with the start of the church age.
- "Go and make disciples of all the nations" (Mat 28.19). Jesus clearly recognises individual nations.
- "... everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem ..." (Zech 14.16). God recognises individual nations even after the church age.

According to these scriptures, individual gentile nations maintain their identity in God's sight throughout the church age, and beyond. In fact, this individuality extends to smaller people groups, even tribes (Rev 7.9). It seems that God is still looking at individual nations today, and warns the rebellious ones:

"His eyes observe the nations; do not let the rebellious exalt themselves." (Ps 66.7)

So let us assume that God has His eye on the British nation (England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland). What does He think of Britain today? What will He do with Britain? To try and answer these questions we first look at Britain over the ages. How has Britain 'performed' in God's sight?

2. Timeline of How Britain has Responded to the Word of God

A nation follows its leaders, be they monarchs, spiritual leaders, inspired individuals, or government. And good and bad leaders (as seen by God) have good and bad effects upon their nation. This pattern is clearly seen in the case of Old Testament Judah: King Hezekiah 'clung to the Lord' and Judah prospered (2 Kings 18.1-8), whilst King Manasseh 'seduced the people to do evil' in the sight of the Lord and 'brought calamity on Jerusalem and Judah' (2 Kings 21.1-16). This pattern is repeated throughout the OT. In short, righteous authority prospers a nation; unrighteousness destroys a nation (Prov 29.2).

Over the ages, Britain's law making leaders have tended to move from King and Church towards secular government, with corresponding changes in Britain's Christianity. Britain has also had many inspired individuals who have benefitted the nation in terms of Christian faith. In addition, Britain has seen changes (for better or worse) on the religious front that have happened without any particular leadership. The following timeline gives a flavour of these changes in Britain over the centuries. Clearly, a comprehensive timeline of events relating to Christianity in Britain is not possible here, and we concentrate on a sample of events, starting quite arbitrarily with King Alfred the Great. This is not to denigrate early Christianity in Britain as seen for example in the work of St Alban, St Patrick, St Columba, St. Augustine and others. It is even claimed that Britain had the world's first Christian church outside Jerusalem¹.

Events in the timeline will be assigned relatively as either 'good' or 'bad'. When Britain appears to have acted, or a change has occurred, in accordance with God's Will (as revealed in inspired scripture, the Bible) we can regard the action as 'a good thing' for Britain in the sense that, overall, she seems to have pleased God and been used by God. Conversely, when Britain appears to have acted, or a change has occurred, in contradiction to (or even in defiance of) God's Will we can regard the action as 'a bad thing' for Britain in the sense that she has, overall, angered God and is in danger of judgement. If enough 'good' and 'bad' events are averaged over time, it may be possible to see a trend in Britain's response to God and His word over the ages. Britain's treatment of Israel and the Jews is of notable importance.

¹ <http://www.arian-catholic.org/arian/firstchurchinbritain.html>

▪ King Alfred the Great (849-899 AD)

King Alfred the Great studied the Bible and had the Gospels translated into the native tongue. His reign became a 'golden age' in which he rebuilt churches, brought over foreign scholars and sponsored a 'renaissance' of Christian learning. He was a law maker who incorporated the 'Ten Commandments' and Christian principles into what would later become the 'Common Law'. Winston Churchill noted when looking back over the centuries at Alfred's life that, "we are witnessing the birth of a nation"².

So this was essentially a 'good thing' for Britain.

▪ Magna Carta (1215 AD)

A charter designed to re-balance power between the King and his subjects. Its content was drafted by Archbishop Stephen Langton and the most powerful Barons of England. It turned out to be a cornerstone of liberty, influencing the constitutions of much of the civilized world, including the USA, Japan, Germany and many Commonwealth countries. The influence of Magna Carta can be seen in the United States Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Today in law it still defends the freedom and rights of the English church, and the freedom and rights of an individual. From here British Common Law evolved into the cherished system of Habeas Corpus and trial by jury: a judicial system which is unknown anywhere on the European Continent³. We recall that God loves justice and the right treatment of individuals.

So this was essentially a 'good thing' for Britain.

▪ Jews Expelled (1290 AD)

Why is this a problem for Britain? Well, when God told Abraham that He was going to make him a great nation, He also said:

"... the one (nation or individual) who curses you I will curse." (Gen 12.3)

The first large groups of Jews came to England from France in 1066 at the invitation of William the Conqueror. In the years that followed, ruthless kings taxed Jews unmercifully. In outbreaks of anti-Semitism Jews were accused of blood rituals and massacred. Their lending records were conveniently destroyed during these outbreaks. Around 1290 AD Edward 1 expelled all Jews from England and for some 365 years it was illegal for an Israelite to live in England. In the light of how nations should treat God's chosen people (Gen 12.3) Britain failed miserably. It is interesting to note that within this period England saw traumatic times; the Black Death killed 1.5 million people out of an estimated total of 4 million people between 1348 and 1350, and around 1555 Mary I ('Bloody Mary') burned nearly 300 Protestants at the stake for heresy against the Catholic Faith.

So this was essentially a 'bad thing' for Britain.

▪ Bible Translation (1382 AD onwards)

The first English Bible translation from the Latin Vulgate was done by the Englishman John Wycliffe and his associates at Oxford University in 1382. In 1525-26, the Englishman William Tyndale was the first to translate considerable parts of the Bible into English for a public lay readership (taking advantage of the new medium of print). Then English Protestant scholars translated what became known as the Geneva Bible (1560), the Bible choice for English speaking Christians for over 100 years. Elizabeth I lent her support to the Bishop's Bible, published in 1568. Under James I, the Geneva and Bishop's translations were used to generate the King James Bible in 1611. This translation was to be chained to the pulpits of every church in the land and lasted some 400 years.

Clearly, despite severe opposition to the Reformers, the scriptures were opened up to English speaking peoples by English speaking peoples, with support from some reigning English monarchs.

So this was essentially a 'good thing' for Britain.

² <http://www.christianhistorytimeline.com/GLIMPSEF/Glimpses/glimps124.shtml>

³ <http://blog.peoplespledge.org/2011/04/21/colin-bullen-corpus-juris-and-the-end-of-british-common-law/>

▪ The English Protestant Reformation (1534 AD)

The rebellion against Rome's false doctrine and malpractices e.g. sale of Indulgencies was initiated in Saxony by Martin Luther in Saxony in 1517. In 1529 the so-called Reformation Parliament (resulting from Henry VIII's personal dispute with Rome) met and resulted in the separation of the English Church from the Papacy in 1534 with the Act of Supremacy. Subsequently the Church of England became Protestant. In 1560, Scotland's Reformation Parliament agreed that the church in Scotland would be Protestant. After Henry's death, a consultation of bishops met and produced the first Book of Common Prayer (often attributed to Archbishop Thomas Cranmer).

Some claim that the Protestant Reformation caused a division of Christians – first dividing Protestants from Rome and then creating Anglicans, Baptists, Methodists, Pentecostals, Congregationalists, Presbyterians and so on! But the salient point is this: the Reformation resulted in the reading of God's Word through mass ownership of Bibles translated into the native tongue, and it transformed the British people into a Bible-based society. This, together with the Lutheran and Calvinistic strive for truth e.g. justification by faith and personal relationship with Christ, the removal of doctrinal error and malpractice, the strict adherence to the Bible, and the new emphasis on prayer must be good in God's sight. More formally, the Protestant Reformers established the "Five Solas": Scripture Alone - Salvation by Grace Alone - Salvation by Faith Alone - In Christ Alone - For the Glory of God Alone.

So this was essentially a 'good thing' for Britain.

▪ Protestants Persecuted (1553-1558 AD)

Sadly, the Reformation led to a long period of warfare and communal violence between Catholic and Protestant factions across Europe. Henry himself persecuted both Catholics (notably Sir Thomas More) *and* dissident Protestants. As mentioned above, some claim the Reformation divided the body of Christ. On the other hand, most persecution from Catholics happened when Christians *quite justifiably* denied the seven sacraments⁴. In particular, these sacraments held that in the mass the priest called down Christ from heaven and sacrificed him anew in a "bloodless sacrifice", the bread of the Eucharist was transformed into Christ's literal flesh and blood, and confession forgave sins.

In Britain this persecution is exemplified through the short rule (1553 to 1558) of Mary I, daughter of Henry VIII. She was a staunch Catholic and persecution came more from a desire for purity in faith than from vengeance (albeit that her faith had serious doctrinal error). Under her rule nearly 300 people (including former Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Cranmer and many of the most prominent members of society) were burned at the stake for heresy, earning Mary the nickname, "Bloody Mary." Persecution of believers attempting to adhere to what is clear to many today as 'truth' cannot be good in God's sight.

So this was essentially a 'bad thing' for Britain.

▪ Britain re-admits Jews (1655 AD)

Why is this important? Well, concerning the nation Israel (the Jews) God says:

"I will bless those (nations or individuals) who bless you ..." (Gen 12.3)

As noted, Jews were expelled from Britain around 1290. But in December 1655 Oliver Cromwell told his Council that he intended to re-admit the Jews. After that, Jews came to England in increasing numbers and for the most part, Britain's Jews have been well-treated since 1656. Many served in Parliament, including Benjamin Disraeli as British Prime Minister. English Jews, such as Moses Montefiore, were strong supporters of the Zionist movement which resettled Jews in Israel, and Chaim Weizmann, the first president of the state of Israel, was British⁵.

So this was essentially a 'good thing' for Britain.

▪ Britain's Christian Awakening (1700's)

During the agricultural and industrial revolution, the Wesley (1703-1791) and Whitefield (1714-1770) ministries, together with those of other preachers, ushered in a period of great spiritual revival and strength, the like of which had never been experienced in Britain before. John Wesley believed that he was specially ordered by God to bring about a revival, and his ministry was to spread the Gospel among the working classes who never went to church. Often as

⁴ <http://www.christian-history.org/catholic-persecution.html>

⁵ <http://www.christianity.com/ChurchHistory/11630127/>

many as 500 people in Whitefield's audience would fall and lay prostrate from the power of God. Historians speak of this time as 'the great work of grace' that transformed England.

So this was essentially a 'good thing' for Britain.

▪ **Missionary Work (1700 – 1900's)**

The beginning of the eighteenth century was an epoch in the history of Protestant missions, including much activity in Britain. From the 1730's to the mid-20th century, Britain was one of the leaders in missionary activity. We could cite individuals such as John Wesley, William Carey, Robert Morrison, David Livingstone, Robert Bruce, Hudson Taylor, C.T. Studd and Gladys Aylward. In addition, from the nineteenth century onwards, Britain spawned mission organisations such as The London Missionary Society, The Baptist Missionary Society, Church Missionary (now Mission) Society, The British and Foreign Bible Society, The Wesleyan Missionary Society, The Plymouth Brethren, The China Inland Mission (now OMF), The Salvation Army and The Mission Aviation Fellowship (USA, Britain and Australia). As a result, the word of God was spread to many nations, including Africa, China, India and South America.

It is also important to identify Britain's role in founding Christianity in America. In 1620 English Separatists began to emigrate to N. America. In September 1620 one hundred Puritans (the 'Pilgrim Fathers') boarded the 'Mayflower' at Plymouth bound for the New World. The Pilgrim Fathers saw little chance of England becoming a country in which they wished to live, and believed that a new start in the New World was their only chance. The Puritans later gave birth to the Baptists and the Congregationalists.

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▪ **Abolition of The Slave Trade**

Forms of slavery waxed and waned in Britain since Roman times. Unfortunately, after 1600, Britain played a prominent role in the Atlantic slave trade, and the profits of the slave trade and of West Indian plantations amounted to 5% of the British economy at the time of the Industrial Revolution. For William Wilberforce the slave trade was a sin for which Britain had to repent or be damned, and he became the voice in Parliament of the Abolition Movement. It took many years of lobbying by the Abolitionists to force the British Parliament to make the slave trade illegal anywhere in the Empire (Slave Trade Act 1807). Thereafter Britain took a prominent role in combating the trade, and slavery itself was abolished in the British Empire with the Slavery Abolition Act 1833. So for many years Christians fought the evil of slavery in Parliament, and eventually won.

So this was essentially a 'good thing' for Britain.

▪ **20th Century Revivals**

In the first part of the 20th century, Britain experienced great spiritual revivals. It saw the Welsh Revival of 1904 under Evan Roberts, where some 500,000 were converted, the rise of the Pentecostal denominations (Elim and AOG) under George and Stephen Jeffreys, the preaching and healing ministry of Smith Wigglesworth, and the Hebridean Revival under Duncan Campbell's ministry around 1950. These revivals saw many miraculous healings and hundreds of thousands brought to Christ.

So this was essentially a 'good thing' for Britain.

▪ **1917 – Liberation of Jerusalem**

On the first day of the Jewish feast of Hanukkah in December 1917, the Battle of Jerusalem resulted in the city of Jerusalem falling to British forces led by General Allenby, an Englishman and a Christian. Prior to the fall of Jerusalem, Allenby had prayed and read his Bible, and it turned out that the Turks gave up the city without firing a shot. In order to show respect for what was considered to be a holy place, Allenby entered the city on foot instead of by horse or vehicle. Many Christians take this event to be a fulfilment of Jesus' prophecy in Lk 21.24. Moreover, Britain had a major hand in such fulfilment.

So this was essentially a 'good thing' for Britain.

▪ The Palestinian Mandate

A.J. Balfour (Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, British Foreign Office) stated that *"His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people ... it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine ..."*. Formally, this became known as 'The Balfour Declaration'.

The 1920 San Remo Peace Conference gave Britain a provisional 'Mandate for Palestine' based upon the Balfour declaration. The British Mandate was formalized in September 1922 by the League of Nations. Essentially this body gave unanimous approval for a Jewish national homeland in Palestine, with Britain, as the Trustee, having the responsibility to see this homeland implemented. Although a Jewish remnant returned to Jerusalem at the end of the Babylonian exile, the majority of Israel remained dispersed amongst the nations (Ezek 22.15). Israel had no 'homeland'. But many prophecies state that God's people Israel will once again be established in their own land before Christ returns (Ezek 37.21)(Isa 11.12) and Britain seemed to be one of God's chosen agents to do this.

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▪ Britain Fails Israel

Britain failed its Mandate responsibility in several ways: in trading or partitioning land mandated for the Jewish homeland, and in limiting Jewish immigration to Israel. In 1923 Britain (illegally) traded the Golan Heights, originally part of the Mandate, to France in exchange for the oil-rich lands of Mosul in Iraq. And in 1937-38 the Peel and Woodhead commissions recommended partitioning Palestine into a small Jewish state and a large Arab state (this was rejected by the Arab leadership).

The British White Paper of 1939 limited Jewish immigration to Palestine to seventy-five thousand over a five year period. The policy therefore repudiated the Balfour Declaration and Britain's commitments under the League of Nations just at the time of greatest need for a sanctuary for Jewish refugees. The White Paper remained the basis of British policy until the end of the British Mandate. On May 14 1948 the Jews proclaimed an independent State of Israel and the British withdrew from Palestine. On the same date, Britain, as Trustee for the 1922 Mandate turned over its responsibility to the UN and withdrew from Palestine. Britain essentially failed in its charge to establish a Jewish homeland, and it was left to the UN and to the Jews themselves.

Over recent years Britain has been funding political activity in Israel⁶. One approach is to help Palestinian's take effective and practical steps against settlement activities i.e. to halt settlement activities. So-called 'land occupation' is a complex issue ('so-called' since some lawyers claim that the land is *not* occupied⁷), but it is serious when a democratic country funds political activities inside another democratic country. Currently the British government takes an anti-Israel stance, notably by pressurizing Israel to make peace with a coalition that states it wants to obliterate Israel⁸. Also, overall, the British media are very hostile to Israel and this has influenced the British people and much of the Church.

So this was essentially a 'bad thing' for Britain.

▪ Britain Looks to Europe (1946)

The term "United States of Europe" was used by Winston Churchill in his speech delivered on 9 September 1946 at the University of Zürich, Switzerland. In this speech given after the end of the Second World War, Churchill concluded that:

*"We must build a kind of United States of Europe. In this way only will hundreds of millions of toilers be able to regain the simple joys and hopes which make life worth living."*⁹

In December 17 of that year, the European Federalists Union was set into place in Paris, the early United Europe Movement was created in 1947, and in 1972 some claim Edward Heath committed an act of treason by misleading the British people concerning Britain's entry into the Common Market – the underlying reason was political union.¹⁰ The godless EU finally came into being via the Maastricht Treaty in 1992. It seems that after WWII, with Churchill's

⁶ http://www.wildolive.co.uk/and_britain.htm

⁷ http://www.seekingtruth.co.uk/israel_borders.htm

⁸ <http://www.spectator.co.uk:80/melaniephillips/6921095/an-open-letter-to-the-rt-hon-david-cameron-mp.shtml>

⁹ Churchill, Winston. "Speech to the Academic Youth". Zürich, Switzerland (1946).

¹⁰ <http://www.vernoncoleman.com/euilegally.html>

encouragement, Britain started looking to man for life's solutions, rather than to God, and this probably contributed to her demise (see Jer 17.5-8).

So this was essentially a 'bad thing' for Britain.

▪ **The Contraceptive Pill (1961)**

In the US the 'Pill' was approved in the mid-1950s for treatment of infertility and menstrual problems, but doctors and women both understood that it stopped ovulation. In Britain the Pill was approved in 1961. According to the Office of National Statistics, the Pill is now the most commonly used contraceptive in the UK.

Clearly, there are advantages to the pill in terms of family planning. But there are also moral arguments against the Pill¹¹, not least that it encourages widespread promiscuity (sexual immorality) and undermines family authority. GPs are allowed to prescribe the Pill to children if they believe an underage girl is mature enough to have sex, and parents have no legal right to be told if their children are being given the Pill. Promiscuity among the very young is increasing: the number of pre-teenage girls on the Pill has increased fivefold in the past decade¹². Fornication and disrespect for parents both clash with biblical moral and ethical teaching; yet UK law facilitates both.

So this was essentially a 'bad thing' for Britain.

▪ **The Abortion Act (1967) and Sexual Morality**

In the 19th century English law was still strongly against abortion. For example, in the 1861 Offences Against the Person Act, performing an abortion or trying to self-abort carried a sentence of life imprisonment. This was relaxed a little in the 1929 Infant Life Preservation Act, which identified a new crime of killing a 28 week-old foetus. But the floodgates were opened by the 1967 Abortion Act of the UK Parliament, which legalised abortion under certain conditions. In 1990, the law was amended by the Human Fertilization and Embryology Act so that abortion was no longer legal after 24 weeks, except under special circumstances. The total number of abortions in England and Wales is currently about 200,000 pa. The vast majority of these are carried out under 'Category C' which is effectively for social reasons rather than to save the mother's life - for example if a pregnant woman does not wish to change her lifestyle by remaining pregnant. In 2008 some 98% of abortions in England and Wales were carried out under category C¹³.

The situation in schools is alarming. School nurses may provide confidential contraceptive and sexual health advice and care in response to individual requests from young people. They advertise that their services are confidential to under 16s¹⁴ which means that consent from parents is not legally necessary. By 2009 Sexual Health Clinics were available in secondary schools to hand out contraception and *help arrange abortions*. Pupils as young as 11 can drop in for free condoms, contraceptive pills, morning-after pills, pregnancy testing and screening for sexually-transmitted diseases. Parents are made aware of the clinics but are not told if their children have attended¹⁵. Despite all the sexual advice, sexually transmitted infections (STIs) among young people are still increasing¹⁶.

Clearly there are a relatively few cases where abortion might be justified e.g. where the mother's health is at risk. But where abortion is for social reasons, as most seem to be, it could be regarded as 'shedding of innocent blood'! The Bible is quite clear on the unborn: the unborn is a person known to God (Jer 1.5) – he or she is not a 'foetus'. And God hates the shedding of innocent blood (Prov 6.17).

So this was essentially a 'bad thing' for Britain.

▪ **The Divorce Reform Act (1969)**

Divorce was first legalised in 1857, when the Matrimonial Causes Act permitted divorce where a spouse had committed adultery. Since then the scope for divorce has considerably widened viz. The Divorce Reform Act 1969 came into effect in England and Wales in 1971 and was consolidated in the Matrimonial Causes Act 1973. The Act made it possible for the first time for divorce to be petitioned for on 'Separation' grounds. The Family Law Act (1996) also attempted to introduce 'no-fault' divorce. Under current UK law, in order to successfully petition for divorce the

¹¹ http://www.bbc.co.uk/ethics/contraception/against_1.shtml

¹² <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-1299416/1-000-girls-Pill-11-Rise-contraceptive-prescription-pre-teens.html>

¹³ <http://www.abort67.co.uk/facts/uk-abortion-statistics.html>

¹⁴ http://www.fpa.org.uk/media/uploads/professionals/pdf_under_16s_consent_and_confidentiality_factsheet_mar_2009.pdf

¹⁵ <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1105186/Sex-clinics-open-EVERY-school-pupils-young-11-tested-parental-consent.html>

¹⁶ http://www.mariestopes.org.uk/PressReleases/UK/New_STI_statistics_highlight_urgent_need_for_improved_sex_education.aspx

petitioner must show that the marriage has irretrievably broken down through Adultery, Desertion, Unreasonable Behaviour, or Separation.

Clearly, in an imperfect world with imperfect relationships there will always be a need for legalised divorce. Both Jesus (Mat 5.32) and Paul (1 Cor 7.15) recognised this reality. That said, it is clear that things have now got out of hand. Liberalization of divorce law saw a rapid increase in the number of UK divorces around 1971 (it more than doubled¹⁷). Britain currently now has one of the highest divorce rates in the world¹⁸ and nearly half of all marriages in England and Wales end in divorce (Office for National Statistics). According to the ONS: "Until the second half of the 20th century divorce was a relatively rare event¹⁹ - in 1901 there were 512 divorces in England and Wales, but in 2001 there were 141,135". According to the Centre for Social Justice (CSJ), "never in Britain's history has family breakdown hit such heights". So liberalisation of divorce law, coupled with social trends e.g. cohabitation are having a very serious effect on the nation.

So this was essentially a 'bad thing' for Britain.

▪ Multifaith Britain

Britain now has many faiths and related communities e.g. Baha'i; Buddhist; Christian; Hindu; Jain; Jewish; Muslim; Sikh; and Zoroastrian communities. It is good to meet people from other cultures. But consider some national trends:

Christianity:

In 1961 there were nearly 55,000 churches in England and Wales, but this has now dropped to around 47,000 despite population growth²⁰. In the Church of England alone, which still has 16,000 churches, 1,700 have been made redundant since 1969. Some claim that the total number of adults, children and young people regularly attending local Anglican churches has dropped by 10% since 2000²¹. Other surveys conclude: "there is no doubt that the long term downward trend in Church attendance (just 6% of the population) continues as does the increase in average age of Churchgoers. So far nothing the Church leaders have done seems to have brought about any change in the decline that started in the 1950's"²². Decline is also true for Roman Catholic and Baptist churches. Since 1980 there has been strong growth in *some* denominations, namely the Orthodox Church and especially the Pentecostal Church and other Free Churches²³ boosted by ethnic minorities. But overall, UK church attendance is still declining²⁴.

Islam:

During the first quarter of the 20th century there were around 10,000 Muslims in Britain, and only around 20,000 in 1950. Currently there are between 1 and 2 million British Muslims (2% - 4% of the population)²⁵, although a Pew Forum report of 2010 puts this number at more than 2.8 million. In 1961 there were just 7 mosques, compared to at least 1,500 mosques today²⁶. According to the Office for National Statistics, the UK Muslim population is now growing some ten times faster than the rest of society. By 2010, a Muslim had become Head of Religious Broadcasting in the BBC.

Other Faiths:

In 1961 there was just one Hindu temple in England and Wales, compared to around 150²⁷ today. The National Council of Hindu Temples UK (NCHT) was established in 1978. The first Shikharbandhi (Jain) Temple to be built on virgin land in Europe was consecrated in August 2005 at Potters Bar, near London²⁸.

Clearly, Britain has a growing diversity of faiths. Many see this as good, but what does the Bible say?

"Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD ... you shall have no other gods before Me" (Ps 34.120, Exod 20.3)

¹⁷ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/datablog/2010/jan/28/divorce-rates-marriage-ons#data>

¹⁸ http://www.nationmaster.com/graph/peo_div_rat-people-divorce-rate

¹⁹ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2008/mar/28/socialtrends>

²⁰ <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/faith/article1362709.ece>

²¹ <http://www.ekklesia.co.uk/node/11080>

²² <http://www.whychurch.org.uk/trends.php>

²³ <http://www.whychurch.org.uk/denomination.php>

²⁴ <http://www.christian-research.org/uk-church-overview/uk-churches-introduction.html>

²⁵ http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/islam/history/uk_1.shtml

²⁶ <http://mosques.muslimsinbritain.org/>

²⁷ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hinduism_in_England

²⁸ <http://www.jainology.org/resources/jain-temples-in-the-uk/>

Here 'LORD' comes from the Hebrew YHWH (Yahweh) – the God of Israel, and so worshipping other gods breaks the first commandment!

How should Christians handle these trends? On a local level, inter-faith action should mean dialogue between faiths without compromising the gospel message:

*"The Christian gospel itself obliges us to engage with those of other faiths with honesty, love, respect and generosity of spirit, as we preach Jesus."*²⁹

The Baptist Union of Great Britain, through the Inter-Faith Task Group, has produced a key document on inter-faith relations³⁰. Key statements are:

"We recognise the reality of a plural world, but are not recommending pluralism as an option. We are not commending inter-faith worship - it is an area fraught with difficulties. We are committed to proclaiming Christ as the light of the world in a world of many faiths and none. This is to be done with respect, understanding and tolerance."

Clearly, some Churches still aim to preach the uniqueness of Christ amidst a multifaith society. But this is increasingly difficult given new equality and religious hatred³¹ laws, and where free-speech³² is under threat. Sadly, despite the good intentions of some churches, from the mid-20th century Britain has seen a trend away from worship of the God of Israel (as revealed in the Ten Commandments), to worship of other gods, something expressly forbidden in the first commandment. Britain has seen a trend away from worship of Jesus as the one and only Mediator between man and God, to pluralism and to many ways of worshipping God (including many definitions of 'God').

So this is essentially a 'bad thing' for Britain.

▪ Faith at Street Level

Over recent years the UK has seen new forms of Christian outreach. These have come mainly from the Christian 'grass roots' (local Christians working at 'street level') rather than from the nation's Christian leaders.

The Street Pastor concept was pioneered in London in 2003, and has seen some remarkable results, including drops in crime in areas where teams have been working. There are now over 100 teams around the UK. Another outreach is 'Healing on the Streets'. This initiative came from a Vineyard Church in Northern Ireland and has spread throughout the towns and cities of the UK. There are many instances of people being healed after prayer on the street. Thirdly, the UK now has a number of community radio stations with a Christian ethos, reaching out into cities with the gospel message. Also, the 'Fresh Expressions' outreach of the Church of England and the Methodist Church aims to plant new forms of church to reach new groups of people across the Britain³³.

There are also numerous Christian festivals and annual conferences across Britain that encourage Christians of all ages and persuasions (Ablaze UK, Creation Fest, Elim Bible Week, Grapevine, Greenbelt, Keswick Convention, New Wine, Soul Survivor to mention just a few). And it is encouraging to see many Christian prayer organisations across the UK urgently lifting up the nation to God (Intercessors UK³⁴, 24/7 Prayer UK³⁵, Lydia Fellowship³⁶, Christians Together³⁷, Global Day of Prayer London³⁸ and Prayer Forum³⁹ to mention just a few). To these we can add numerous small church groups praying 24/7 (an aim of this article is to inform and encourage such groups).

So this is essentially a 'good thing' for Britain.

²⁹ An Inter Faith Strategy for the Churches. Diocese of Ripon and Leeds and the Leeds Methodist District in association with the Roman Catholic Diocese of Leeds

³⁰ http://www.churches-together.net/Mobile/default.aspx?group_id=85053&article_id=172894

³¹ http://www.theregister.co.uk/2007/09/13/religious_hatred_act/

³² <http://www.scottishchristianparty.org.uk/news/free-speech-bill/>

³³ <http://www.freshexpressions.org.uk/>

³⁴ <http://www.intercessuk.org/iuk3/index.php>

³⁵ <http://uk.24-7prayer.com/>

³⁶ <http://www.lydiafellowshipinternational.org/national-pages95263/england-6219.php>

³⁷ <http://www.christianstogether.net/>

³⁸ <http://gdoplondon.com/>

³⁹ <http://www.prayerforum.org/ministries/england/england-national/>

■ Britain's Politically Correct Leaders

In the past, the Monarch would call the nation to prayer during times of crisis. The last to do so was King George VI, who, acting under the advice of Winston Churchill, called the nation to a National Day of Prayer for Repentance and Petition for Deliverance during World War II. One day after the call, Hitler ignored the advice of many of his generals and ordered his armies to hold their positions. The then Archbishop of Canterbury also joined in calling the people of Britain to a time of united prayer. Churches were filled on the day of prayer, Sunday, May 26, 1940.

Today's leaders lack such faith. When Tony Blair was asked by the Rev. Ian Paisley to issue such a call, he replied:

"I am sure that the nation will pray in its own way for what the hon. Gentleman says. I do not know whether it is right for Government to impose that ..."

And when Tony Blair was asked in an interview about his Christian faith, he was interrupted by his spin-doctor Alistair Campbell (an atheist) who said: 'I'm sorry, we don't do God.' Surely, a government that does not 'do' God is missing something important? If it tries to build a nation without God it is doomed to fail - only righteousness exalts a nation (Prov 14.34). And with such complacency regarding the Christian faith, the government can hardly be expected to support a call to prayer from the Christian Church since the British government tries to appease all faiths!

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, demonstrates political correctness when he treads the interfaith path⁴⁰ without stressing that Christ is the one and only way to God. For example, to endorse Jainism is to endorse a faith that rejects the idea of a creator god! And when Williams endorsed the idea of applying portions of the Islamic law (the Shari'a) in Britain⁴¹ by reasoning that Muslims would not face "the stark alternatives of cultural loyalty or state loyalty" his political correctness actually opened up an uncomfortable truth. This is discussed in Section 4.2.

Sadly, today's monarch, the Queen, has also fallen into the politically correct chasm. The Preface to the 39 Articles of the Church of England describes the monarch as 'being by God's Ordinance, according to Our just Title, Defender of the Faith and ... Supreme Governor of the Church of England'. So the Sovereign holds the title 'Defender of the Faith and Supreme Governor of the Church of England', which surely means that the Queen has publicly declared to uphold the *uniqueness* of the Christian faith, with Christ as the only Mediator between man and God. Her coronation oath included:

"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?"⁴²

To her credit, the Queen upheld Christianity and the King James Bible in her 2010 Christmas message⁴³. Yet this title and oath seems meaningless when the Queen endorses other faiths. For example, in 2002 the Queen visited a British Sikh temple as part of a nationwide tour marking her 50 years on the throne. During this visit she was greeted as the "queen of all faiths"⁴⁴. In 2010 the Queen (barefoot and with covered head) visited the largest mosque in Abu Dhabi as part of a state visit to the UAE.⁴⁵ Here we have the defender of the Christian faith showing respect to Muslims by visiting a national Islamic shrine. Paul did a similar thing when he examined the objects of worship in Athens (Acts 17.23). But why does the British Foreign Office not allow the Queen to show similar respect to the Jews through a state visit to Israel?⁴⁶ Is this to placate Islam?

Sadly, it seems that in order to appease all faiths and not to cause offense, Britain's leaders shy away from upholding Christianity as unique amongst faiths. They no longer point the nation to the uniqueness of the God of Israel. This is a sad indictment on them and on Britain's political correctness and godlessness.

So this is essentially a 'bad thing' for Britain.

⁴⁰ <http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/articles.php/989/archbishops-visit-to-dawoodi-bohra-mosque-and-jain-temple>

⁴¹ <http://www.islamist-watch.org/250/britains-encounter-with-islamic-law>

⁴² <http://oremus.org/liturgy/coronation/cor1953b.html>

⁴³ <http://www.royal.gov.uk/ImagesandBroadcasts/TheQueensChristmasBroadcasts/ChristmasBroadcasts/ChristmasBroadcast2010.aspx>

⁴⁴ <http://wwwrn.org/articles/14430/?§ion=sikhism>

⁴⁵ <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1332764/Queen-shoeless-dons-beekeeper-hat-Abu-Dhabi-mosque-visit.html#ixzz1LtAs4HY>

⁴⁶ <http://www.whyyisrael.org/2010/02/02/britain-israel-and-the-jews-an-inconvenient-truth-%E2%80%A6/>

■ Humanistic Law from the EU

The European Communities Act 1972 ensures that EU legislation becomes UK law. So UK law tends to comply with the stream of 'Directives' coming from Brussels. It has been estimated that some 40% of UK law is based on EU legislation (Lord Malloch-Brown in a parliamentary response)⁴⁷. For example, one such Directive concerns EU Equality Law, and this is now incorporated into the UK Equality Act 2010. The concept of *equal treatment* and *anti-discrimination* is enshrined in the Bible; God loves justice and equality. The problem is that EU law originates from a humanistic-secular root and now poses severe problems for Christians and free-speech. France in particular maintains that "the EU had to remain a secular construction respective of its different traditions and religions" [Michel Barnier, French Foreign Minister 2004-2005]. Correspondingly, it is stated that there will be no reference to Europe's Christian roots in any revised EU Treaty. German chancellor Angela Merkel has said "there is not much of a chance on the prospects of God appearing in a preamble to the EU text".

It is widely accepted that the Common Law of England had Judaeo-Christian roots⁴⁸. But from 1972 onwards, this has gradually been replaced by humanistic law from Europe. The European Legal Area Project⁴⁹ now threatens to replace Britain's cherished Habeas Corpus (presumption of innocence and trial by jury) with the EU system of Corpus Juris (demands proof of innocence and no trial by jury).

So this is essentially a 'bad thing' for Britain.

■ The Abandonment of Absolute Truth

As we have seen, around the middle of the 20th century Britain started to turn its back on traditional Christian values. In particular, it questioned whether the absolute truths contained in the Bible were relevant to society, and rejected the concept that Jesus Christ is the source of all real truth (Jn 14.6). For instance, what about morality? Today's Britain holds fast to 'moral' relativism, namely, "morals are relative to culture and society - so all morals are equally valid"; homosexual activity is as acceptable as heterosexual activity. What about religious pluralism? This maintains that all religions are equally valid ways to God. In the name of 'tolerance' it says "your way through Jesus is true", and "my way through meditation is true". What about the origin of man? Today Britain maintains "macro-evolution is scientific fact" and ridicules the biblical creation account.

As the Bible says "*truth is fallen in the street*" (Isa 59.14).

So this is essentially a 'bad thing' for Britain.

■ Homosexuality and Ethics

The UK has progressively legalised private homosexual acts between consenting adults. The Sexual Offences Act (1967) decriminalised private sexual acts between men 21 years or over in England and Wales. The minimum age of consent for certain homosexual acts was then reduced to 16 in England and Wales by the Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2000. In response to EU directives, the UK government introduced the Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007, and anti-discrimination legislation in the Equality Act 2010. A serious effect of such legislation is that UK Christians find it increasingly difficult to express their faith and sexual ethics in the workplace⁵⁰. Some are simply dismissed. It also encourages public bodies to support homosexual behaviour e.g. members from the UK Gay Police Association participate in uniform at Gay Pride Marches⁵¹.

Equality law is also having an effect upon the usual understanding of marriage. So celebration of same-sex unions is to be permitted in places of worship⁵² and the law in England and Wales was changed in 2005 to permit gay couples to adopt children⁵³ despite the proved increased health risk to children living within such a relationship⁵⁴. The UK government could even scrap the legal definition of marriage as a relationship between a man and a woman in order to accommodate the gay agenda.

⁴⁷ <http://www.theyworkforyou.com/wrans/?id=2009-04-28a.28.1>

⁴⁸ <http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/social-applied-sciences/crime-and-policing/Staff/sharon-hanson/>

⁴⁹ <http://blog.peoplespledge.org/2011/04/21/colin-bullen-corpus-juris-and-the-end-of-british-common-law/>

⁵⁰ <http://www.christianconcern.com/our-concerns>

⁵¹ <http://edinburghnews.scotsman.com/gayandlesbianissues/Police-in-uniform-to-join.5400669.jp>

⁵² <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/gay-weddings-to-be-allowed-in-church-1915467.html>

⁵³ http://www.adoption.org.uk/information/adoption_law.html

⁵⁴ <http://www.orthodoxytoday.org/articles/GlennGayAdoption.php>

Of course there are many loving same-sex couples enjoying life together, often for companionship and convenience. A problem only arises when moral (sexual) boundaries are crossed. Bible teaching on how God views physical same-sex relations is clear, from Genesis to Revelation⁵⁵. A key sin of Sodom was homosexuality – something even Lot describes as ‘wicked’ (Gen 19.4-7). And in Rev 22.15 Jesus says that people who practice such things will be kept outside the heavenly city. Today Britain’s new equality laws are effectively calling evil good and good evil when they sanction homosexual behaviour.

“Woe to those who call evil good and good evil ...” (Isa 5.20)

So this is essentially a ‘bad thing’ for Britain.

▪ The Gay Agenda for Schools

The equality agenda⁵⁶ is very disturbing for schools⁵⁷. In January 2010 Nick Clegg stated in an interview with a British magazine for homosexuals, that all faith schools in the United Kingdom should be legally obliged to teach children that homosexuality is normal. This dictatorial statement seemed to ignore the rights and deeply held views of parents⁵⁸. And David Cameron has apologised for Section 28, the legislation which banned the promotion of homosexuality in schools.

In state-funded schools children as young as five should learn about gay relationships and boys should be allowed to express their feminine sides by dressing in frocks, according to a Government-funded initiative⁵⁹. In a training pack sent to staff in primary schools, teachers are urged to ‘celebrate difference’ by using books such as *King And King*, a story about a fairytale prince who kisses and marries another prince. Posters in the pack, including one entitled *Different Families Same Love*, show families with two mothers or two fathers, and a DVD quotes a teacher saying children should learn to be ‘resilient’ to the values of their parents if they disagree over gay issues. The new pack was created by the gay rights organisation Stonewall with the help of a £25,000 grant from the Government’s teacher training body, the Training and Development Agency for Schools. Schools and local authorities are urged to use the material to demonstrate they are complying with the Equality Act 2010, which obliges public bodies to promote equality.

When Britain’s equality law clashes with biblical teaching we must question its validity, especially when directed at children (Mat 18.6).

So this is essentially a ‘bad thing’ for Britain.

▪ Evolution not Creation in Schools

In 2010 experts including three Nobel laureates and atheist Richard Dawkins called on the British government to make teaching of the evolution theory a compulsory part of the curriculum because of the “threat” posed by the religious concept of creationism. They wrote: “Evolution is the most important idea underlying biological science. It is a key concept that children should be introduced to at an early stage”. These comments were endorsed by Simon Barrow, co-director of Ekklesia⁶⁰ who encouraged “the resisting of the blandishments and ploys of a persistent minority who may try to use Academies and so-called Free Schools to edge out factual teaching on evolutionary biology and edge in non-scientific creationist ideas - ones which are rejected by all the mainstream churches, and which are issues concerning the history of religion and belief, rather than scientific method and content.” The government upholds this view and says “teaching creationism (which denies macro-evolution) is at odds with scientific fact”⁶¹.

But Darwinian macro-evolution (involving transitions between distinct kinds of plants and animals) is far from established as a fact - there are major holes in the theory⁶² and there is considerable scientific support for the accuracy of the biblical account of creation and even a ‘young earth’^{63,64}. To rule out a balanced teaching of both is unscientific. But the real problem lies with the *implication* of Darwinian Theory. The essence of Darwin's theory is that all organisms

⁵⁵ <http://www.seekingtruth.co.uk/homosex.htm>

⁵⁶ <http://www.anglican-mainstream.net/2008/05/23/british-foreign-office-to-promote-gay-agenda-in-other-countries/>

⁵⁷ <http://www.christianconcern.com/our-concerns/education/young-children-to-be-taught-about-homosexuality-in-school>

⁵⁸ <http://www.christian.org.uk/news/clegg-slammed-over-faith-school-comments/>

⁵⁹ <http://www.anglican-mainstream.net/2011/03/13/government-funded-advice-pack-for-schools-recommends-lessons-in-cheerleading-and-wearing-dresses-for-boys-aged-five/>

⁶⁰ <http://www.ekklesia.co.uk/node/12412>

⁶¹ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/science/2011/mar/21/free-schools-creationism-department-education>

⁶² <http://www.seekingtruth.co.uk/evolution.htm>

⁶³ <http://www.csm.org.uk/>

⁶⁴ http://www.seekingtruth.co.uk/young_earth_creationism.htm

that exist today are products of random mutation and natural selection (the survival of the fittest) and it all happened by chance when conditions were 'just right' for the evolution of life. As Dawkins admits, "the chances of each of us coming into existence are infinitesimally small". So the underlying thesis is that we are here by chance and it didn't need a Creator God! The theistic evolutionist counters this by believing that 'the initial matter was brought into existence by God', but is this the viewpoint the British government wants in schools?

Clearly, the teaching of evolutionary science without reference to creation science (which gives significant scientific support to creationism) undermines the authority of the Bible in the eyes of British children. In fact, take away the concept of creation, and the rest of the Bible becomes meaningless.

So this is essentially a 'bad thing' for Britain.

2.1 Conclusion: Britain is being led away from God's Will

The foregoing timeline attempts to highlight how Britain has, or has not, aligned itself with God's Will (His word) over the centuries. We have identified some major events or changes that seem to have been either good or bad for Britain in the light of God's Will. These have occurred either through monarchs, governments, national organisations, or inspired individuals. We have also found that some changes either towards or away from the word of God have 'just happened' without any obvious leadership, as in the changing religious faith of Britain. Clearly, if space permitted the timeline could be expanded to include more events, both notionally 'good' and notionally 'bad' for Britain, like the medieval crusades and Britain's policy on recent wars, overseas aid and climate change.

In order to come to some conclusion as to any trend in the spiritual state of Britain we need to take an average, long-term view. Consider the 1,000 year period up to the mid-20th century. With some notable exceptions, the balance is in favour of a 'good thing' for Britain in the sight of God. She opened up the Bible to the common man, enthusiastically spread the Gospel at home and abroad, generally supported Israel, and developed a democracy (Common Law) with Judeo-Christian roots⁶⁵ that became the envy of nations. But around the mid-20th century it seems that Britain made determined moves away from these things and away from the Will of God and His word. She started looking to humanistic government (Europe), relaxed laws on sexuality, abortion and divorce, embraced other faiths and their 'gods', failed to uphold Christianity as unique amongst faiths, failed to support Israel, and abandoned biblical creation for creation-less Darwinian evolution.

Consider this in a little more detail:

- From King Alfred to around the middle of the 20th century, Britain (particularly England and Scotland) seemed to be used by God to open the word of God to the British people, and then to much of the world. With some notable exceptions, Britain's leaders and the British people generally adhered to biblical principles rather than to other faiths. Simultaneously, Britain evolved a pattern of democracy and justice largely based upon biblical morality and ethics, and this has been a model for many other democracies.

It is interesting that over this period Britain eventually prospered in terms of influence and material wealth, culminating in the British Empire and the Industrial Revolution. The British Empire originated with the overseas colonies and trading posts established in the late 16th and early 17th centuries. At its height (c1800 – 1900) it was the largest empire in history and the foremost global power. Practical reasons for this wealth have been advanced e.g. abundant coal and New World colonies, together with much profit from the slave trade, to Britain's shame⁶⁶. Some see the British Empire as void of morality and ethics; others see it as righting the wrongs of paganism and allowing peoples to flower⁶⁷. By 1870 Britain was the most industrialised and the most powerful country in the world⁶⁸. Some measures suggest Britain's prosperity peaked around 1900⁶⁹, but even as late as 1939 the Royal Navy was still the largest navy in the world⁷⁰. In terms of social structure, the Industrial Revolution witnessed the triumph of a middle class of industrialists and businessmen over a landed class of nobility and gentry, and ordinary

⁶⁵ <http://www.lawgazette.co.uk/blogs/news-blog/are-law-s-judaeo-christian-roots-withering>

⁶⁶ <http://www.countercurrents.org/africa-drayton200805.htm>

⁶⁷ <http://www.adequacy.org/stories/2001.7.13.133240.148.html>

⁶⁸ <http://www.historyhome.co.uk/peel/politics/reform.htm>

⁶⁹ http://www.google.co.uk/search?q=Britain's+prosperity+wealth+timeline&hl=en&sa=G&biw=1571&bih=688&rlz=1R2GPEA_en-GB&prmd=ivns&tbs=tl:1&tbo=u&ei=Ak_GTcSRPMi2hQfQ-qjrAw&oi=timeline_result&ct=title&resnum=11&ved=0CEgQ5wIwCg

⁷⁰ <http://www.naval-history.net/WW2CampaignRoyalNavy.htm>

working people found increased opportunities for employment⁷¹. Average income began to exhibit unprecedented sustained growth.

- Around the middle of the 20th century we see signs of Britain moving away from God. Around this time we see a trend away from what might be seen as 'good things' for Britain, towards what might be seen as 'bad things' for Britain. In the 1940's Britain defaulted on her charge to establish a Jewish homeland and significantly hindered Jewish immigration. She also started to look to Europe rather than to God. The 1950s saw a start in the slow decline in attendance in most Institutional Churches (Anglican Church, Roman Catholic and Baptist). The 1960's saw a liberalisation of morality and ethics through new laws relating to contraception, abortion, homosexuality and divorce. This trend is also noted in the book 'The Death of Christian Britain: Understanding secularisation 1800-2000' by Callum Brown⁷². Brown writes:

"Christianity in Britain enjoyed a long nineteenth century of prosperity, between 1800 and 1960, and only began to go into terminal decline in the early 1960s."

- Britain's spiritual decline accelerated in the late 20th century and into the 21st century, helped by law dictated from Europe. Under new equality laws e.g. the Equality Act 2010, Christians have suffered nothing less than persecution for simply expressing their faith⁷³. The aggressive equality agenda has also enabled Britain's schools to be infiltrated by the gay lobby, and it has campaigned for the celebration of civil partnerships in churches.

Since the mid-20th century, attendance at most of Britain's Institutional Churches has declined whilst mosques and Hindu, Sikh and Jain temples have flourished. Most of Britain's political and religious leaders are no longer willing to publicly uphold Christian beliefs above all other beliefs. Even the Queen treads the political correctness tight rope, carefully balancing her multifith functions with her coronation oath promising "to maintain in the United Kingdom the Protestant Reformed Religion".

The spiritual decline was accompanied by economic decline, and the decline of the British Empire (which some see starting around the middle of the 20th century⁷⁴). Although Britain still ranks 5th in the world in terms of GDP⁷⁵, from the late 19th century onwards Britain experienced a *relative* economic decline when compared to the world's other leading economies. In 1870, Britain's output per head was the second highest in the world after Australia. By 1914, it was fourth highest, having been overtaken. In 1950, British output per head was still 30 per cent ahead of the six founder members of the EEC, but within 50 years it had been overtaken by many European and several Asian countries⁷⁶. In 2010 general government debt was £1100 billion⁷⁷ and in July 2011 government public sector net debt (PSDN) rose by £134m per day⁷⁸!

What has happened to Britain over the centuries might be summarized by the proverb:

***"When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice;
but when a wicked man rules, the people groan."*** (Prov 29.2)

Since the middle of the 20th century (say from 1950) it seems that the British people have been led away from God's Will. According to the timeline, up to 1950 some 73% of changes relating to Christianity in Britain might be described as 'aligning with God's Will', but since 1950 only some 10% of such changes seem to align with God's Will. ***Since 1950 some 90% of the changes relating to Christianity in Britain appear to be against God's Will!*** There seems a distinct trend *away* from the God of Israel and His word, the Bible. Of course the statistics can be adjusted either up or down, but it is hard to see that any adjustment would show a trend *towards* God or even conclude that *no real change* has occurred over the centuries. In fact, many British people sense a negative change without a timeline analysis and often say 'Britain is not what it used to be'!

How has Britain been 'led away'? Sometimes this has been blatant, as in the signing of EU treaties without referenda, but mostly it has been gradual and subtle through changes in law and social attitudes. It seems that

⁷¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Industrial_Revolution

⁷² London and New York, Routledge, 2001, ISBN: 9780415241847; 272pp.

⁷³ <http://www.seekingtruth.co.uk/persecution.htm>

⁷⁴ <http://www.britishempire.co.uk/article/liverpool.htm>

⁷⁵ <http://www.research.hsbc.com/midas/Res/RDV?ao=20&key=ej73gSSJVj&n=282364.PDF>

⁷⁶ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Economic_history_of_the_United_Kingdom

⁷⁷ <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/cc/nugget.asp?id=277>

⁷⁸ <http://www.creditaction.org.uk/helpful-resources/debt-statistics.html>

our secular and spiritual leaders have themselves been led astray by listening to very vocal and aggressive minority groups with access to a sympathetic media, by dominant EU directives, and by political correctness anxious to appease other faiths.

Yet, despite politically correct leaders, an aggressive gay lobby, an aggressive humanist-evolutionary lobby, an aggressive media, and the dominance of humanistic EU law, there still seems hope for Britain. Whilst most Institutional Churches have seen decline, the Pentecostal and other Free Churches have seen rapid growth, coupled with the emergence of Christian witness at street level (Street Pastors, Healing on the Streets, and Christian community radio). Also, various surveys indicate that the British people are *not* secular in the sense of being predominantly unreligious and point out that Church attendance is not the only measure of faith⁷⁹. And even if a nation refuses to listen to God's witness (by ignoring God's word), His moral and ethical code for man is still written upon an individual's conscience (Rom 2.14,15).

The question is: 'Does today's Britain anger God?'

3. How Does a Nation Anger God?

3.1 The Relevance of Biblical Law to Britain

Starting with the Ten Commandments in Exodus and progressing through Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, the Old Testament Law attempted to summarise God's righteous Will for His chosen nation Israel. Some of these laws are restated in the New Testament as commandments for modern man. In particular, Jesus expanded some of them into more complete and broader principles of living for all time and all peoples (Mat 5.17).

For example, He expanded the 1st commandment (to have no other god but the God of Israel) to the need to love and serve the God of Israel with zeal (Mat 22.37). He expanded the 4th commandment (keeping the Sabbath, and resting from work) to one of respecting it whilst being pragmatic, even to the extent of 'breaking' the Sabbath to show compassion (Mk 3.1-5). He expanded the 7th commandment on *acts* of adultery (Exod 20.14) to include *thoughts* of adultery (Mat 5.28) and the importance of marriage fidelity (Mat 5.32). He summarised the 8th, 9th and 10th Commandments in the commandment to 'love your neighbour as yourself' (Mat 22.39). Similarly, Paul expanded the OT law on *acts* of homosexuality (Lev 18.22) to point out that to do such acts is against the natural order of creation and so results in physical problems (Rom 1.26,27).

We must remember that Israel was to be *God's witness* to the nations (Isa 43.10); they were to make a name for Him amongst the nations and this included revelation of His Will and character and blessings to all men (Acts 3.25). So since much of the OT Law as given to Israel is carried over in a broadened sense into NT teaching, it must be applicable in its broadened sense to modern society – to Britain. In fact, British democracy and Common Law was founded upon much of this teaching,⁸⁰ and most people still readily admit that it is wrong to lust after your next of kin (Lev 18), to commit adultery and to steal. They accept that a really good way to live is to 'love your neighbour', and they would consider it morally and physically repugnant to have sexual intercourse with an animal (Lev 18.23). But strangely British law now finds it acceptable to perform unnatural sexual acts between members of the same sex even when Lev 18.22 and NT teaching says it is an abomination in God's sight⁸¹.

In summary, where OT law spills over into a broad, context-free command in the NT we are justified in using it as a critique for Britain! So when we find OT pagan nations and peoples being judged because they mocked God's moral code, or worshipped idols, we can expect similar treatment of Britain today.

3.2 Examples of How Britain has Angered God

From the above argument, it seems a nation or people group must be in danger of angering God if it flouts God's Will as revealed in the Bible e.g. if it flouts the Ten Commandments, or some other specific moral precept given to Israel. In general terms, Israel angered God by pursuing 'wicked ways' (2 Chron 7.14)(Dan 9.5) and by 'doing evil' in God's sight (Jer 18.8,10). So how does a nation like Britain fall into 'wicked ways'? It does this when it departs from God's

⁷⁹ <http://www.parliamentarybrief.com/2011/01/the-secular-country-that-cant-give-up-god>

⁸⁰ <http://www.lawgazette.co.uk/blogs/news-blog/are-law-s-judaeo-christian-roots-withering?page=1>

⁸¹ <http://www.seekingtruth.co.uk/homosex.htm>

precepts – His principles for living, particularly moral principles (Dan 9.11)(Isa 24.5) as revealed in both Old and New Testaments. Let's try and summarize how Britain has angered God, aided by the foregoing timeline:

- Britain does not 'seek the Lord', the God of Israel (Zeph 2.3), or 'seek the truth' (Jer 5.1) as found in the Bible. Today we see this in low and declining church attendance (just 6% of the population). When it comes to 'truth' it is popular to adopt the Postmodernist concept of relativism, namely, "there is no ultimate truth; truth is relative to persons, times, circumstances or culture", and the Church's stance on truth is considered outdated.
- Britain goes after other 'gods' and worships 'idols' (Jer 19.4,5)(Deut 7.25,26). Today we see this in the closure of churches and the rapid growth of Islamic mosques and Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist and Jain temples across Britain. London may see the construction of the largest mosque in Europe and Hinduism readily accepts idol worship. The basic theology behind these faiths, specifically their view of Jesus Christ and the nature of God are at variance with biblical teaching, both OT and NT. Do these faiths honour even the first two commandments – to love and serve the God of Israel and not to worship idols? Yet Britain has welcomed the expansion of these faiths.

Britain also seeks 'other gods and idols' in rampant materialism (24/7 shopping) and in pleasure seeking.

- Britain targets believers in Christ⁸² (Mat 10.17-20)(Mat 5.11). At present this usually occurs in the workplace, where Christians in public roles are sometimes required to act against their conscience. Paradoxically, this is done with the intention of eliminating discrimination!
- Britain ignores God's servants – God's voice (Dan 9.6,10). Today the church and its leaders tend not to be heard, or they are ignored or even ridiculed. Few evangelical speakers are heard on the national media (the BBC has been accused of bias against Christianity⁸³). An exception is the Roman Catholic Church, which still gets a public voice, even when it condemns Britain's intolerance to Christian ethics in the workplace⁸⁴.
- Britain is rebellious (Zeph 3.1)(Ps 2.1-3), proud and haughty (Isa 24.4). Today we see this in government ministers who voted in the face of Britain's Christian heritage to encourage civil partnerships, abolish blasphemy laws and implement sexual orientation regulations. We see it in public bodies like the police that openly support gay marches and in councils who wish to abolish Christmas⁸⁵. We see it in the media's portrayal of biblical creation as 'myth' and *godless* macro-evolution as 'true science', and we see it in the general rejection of biblical moral boundaries concerning fornication and homosexuality.
- Britain's secular leaders, those in positions of power, are reckless, arrogant and dishonest (Dan 9.8)(Ezek 22.27)(Zeph 3.3). Today we see this in reckless bankers, dishonest MPs, and the deception of government - as in Iraq, the quiet appearance of Halal meat in shops, and in the quiet devolution of Britain's laws to the EU. We see it in arrogant judges who seem out of step with public opinion (resulting in low levels of public confidence in the criminal justice system⁸⁶) and who claim 'religious faith is subjective, being incommunicable by any kind of proof or evidence'⁸⁷.
- Britain's religious leaders fall into error (Zeph 3.4)(Hos 9.7). Today we see this in the political correctness of Britain's Christian church leaders (and unfortunately in the Queen) in an attempt to appease other faiths. Christianity is no longer held up as unique amongst other faiths. The Church is in danger of teaching universalism – many ways to God – and of becoming polarised over the issue of gay rights.
- Britain teaches its children error (Mat 18.6,7). Today we see this in unbiblical teaching in schools; same-sex sexual acts are promoted as being 'OK', and humanistic, godless macro-evolution is claimed to be 'proved beyond all doubt' ('a fact' according to Dawkins). The young deserve a balanced scientific argument. We also see widely available teenage sexual health advice, with no legal requirement to inform parents. This undermines the biblical picture of parental authority and care (Prov 22.6).
- Britain hinders or oppresses God's chosen people, Israel, despite the severe warning in Gen 12.3. This was seen in a pro-Arab stance during the 20th century, especially in the hindrance to Jewish immigration in the 1940's, and

⁸² <http://www.seekingtruth.co.uk/persecution.htm>

⁸³ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-11191992>

⁸⁴ <http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/news/2010/09/17/papal-visit-2010-the-popes-speech-in-westminster-hall-full-text/>

⁸⁵ <http://www.christian.org.uk/news/council-backs-ramadan-but-wont-say-christmas/>

⁸⁶ <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/depsta/law/research/icpr/publications/confidence%20in%20justice.pdf>

⁸⁷ Lord Justice Laws dismissing permission for the Gary McFarlane case to go to the Court of Appeal, 2010

culminating in Britain's abandonment in 1948 of her Mandate to help the Jews create their own state. Today the British government, media, church and people generally take a distinct anti-Israel stance⁸⁸.

- Britain kills the unborn that are already known to God as *people* (Jer 1.5). UK abortion today kills some 200,000 babies each year. In God's view this sheds the blood of the innocent (Jer 19.4) and is hated by Him.
- Britain views divorce as 'acceptable', rather than as the exception (Mat 19.1-9). Divorce saw a rapid rise after the law was relaxed around 1970 and now Britain has one of the highest divorce rates in the world.
- Britain plans to allow same-sex unions to be celebrated in places of worship, removing a key legal distinction between homosexual civil partnerships and heterosexual marriage. The government may also scrap the legal definition of marriage as a relationship between a man and a woman, allowing gay men and women to call their partners husbands or wives. In God's sight, marriage is solely between a man and a woman (Gen 2.24) and so such government legislation would be an abomination in God's sight.

4. What Happens When a Nation Angers God?

4.1 Unrepentant Nations are Destroyed

Consider:

"The instant I speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, to pull down, and to destroy it, if that nation against whom I have spoken turns from its evil, I will relent of the disaster that I thought to bring upon it." (Jer 18.7,8)

"The instant I speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it, if it does evil in My sight so that it does not obey My voice, then I will relent concerning the good with which I said I would benefit it." (Jer 18.9,10)

The word 'nation' here is from the Hebrew 'goy' meaning a *foreign* or *gentile* nation, so the text refers to nations in general, including Britain. If a nation does evil in God's sight it is 'plucked up and destroyed'! A nation's final destiny is in the hands of God and not in its government or elections. God destroys wicked nations (Zeph 3.6) including their unrepentant cities – as in Tyre, Sidon, Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum (Mat 11.20–24). Tyre and Sidon were known for their wisdom, merchants, wealth, power, pride, greed, theft, and idolatry, but they were outside the nation of Israel and didn't receive direct revelation from Jesus. In contrast, Jesus had performed miracles in Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum and *still* they didn't repent. Similarly, Britain has heard the Gospel for hundreds of years and seen great revivals, even miracles, but still she is turning her back on God. How ripe for judgement?

Of course, it can be argued that all nations today are guilty of the charge of wickedness to some degree and therefore court destruction. If and when national judgement occurs is God's business – He is slow to anger and compassionate, withdrawing the threatened judgement of repentant cities (Jon 3.10). Warnings may come first, as for OT Israel. But it would seem dangerous to push God to the limit with an 'outcry of sin' to Him (Gen 18.20)! And it seems dangerous to anger God over poor treatment of His chosen people Israel – they are the 'apple of His eye' (Zech 2.8).

4.2 Mechanisms of Destruction

In Deut 28 we read how God would deal with the nation Israel if they were disobedient to Him; a catalogue of disasters would be inflicted upon Israel until they were destroyed. One such disaster was *drought* (Deut 28.23,24). But exactly the same disaster, drought, would seem to be inflicted upon rebellious nations in the future (Zech 14.17,18). So it is reasonable to suppose that many of the disasters (curses) detailed in Deut 28 could well be applied in some form (maybe as warnings) to present-day rebellious nations like Britain.

For instance, based upon Deut 28, Britain might expect to experience problems similar to the following:

⁸⁸ <http://www.spectator.co.uk:80/melaniephillips/6921095/an-open-letter-to-the-rt-hon-david-cameron-mp.shtml>

- problems in the city e.g. economic problems (v16)
- problems in the country e.g. cattle and land produce problems (v16, 18, 31)
- drought (v24)
- food shortages (v38)
- severe personal health problems, extending to widespread plague (v22, 35)
- suffering sons and daughters (v32, 41)
- suffering elderly (v50)
- problems with marriage (v30)
- confusion of mind and heart, leading to mental instability (v28)
- occupation and dominance by an alien culture, forced worship of foreign gods (v36, 43)
- financial subservience to the alien culture, being the tail rather than the head (v43, 44)
- crushing and oppression - like a yoke of iron - from foreigners (v33, 48)
- insignificance amongst the nations, a byword (v37)

Let's compare some of the above 'curses' with recent events in Britain:

- **Confusion:** Since the mid-20th century there have been two general elections that resulted in hung parliaments. The first was in February 1974, and the ensuing parliament lasted only until that October. The second was the May 2010 election. The strengths and weaknesses of a hung parliament are debated⁸⁹ but a 2011 IFG poll found that 68% of people think the coalition has created weaker government, 73% believe it is less decisive and 80% say it is 'more confused'⁹⁰. This may be partly due to the perception of 'no overall control' and the rather large number of government u-turns⁹¹.
- **Economic Problems:** National debt as a percentage of GDP has waxed and waned over the years⁹². Britain borrowed heavily to finance wars and the debt rose to 150% of GDP after the WWI and to 250% after WWII. The percentage debt then dropped rapidly. War aside, from the late 19th century onwards Britain experienced a *relative economic decline* when compared to the world's other leading economies. In 1870, Britain's output per head was the second highest in the world after Australia. By 1914, it was fourth highest, having been overtaken. In 1950, British output per head was still 30 per cent ahead of the six founder members of the EEC, but within 50 years it had been overtaken by many European and several Asian countries⁹³ (note the rapid decline after 1950). Today general government debt is again rising rapidly⁹⁴, sitting at over £1100 billion or 76% of GDP in 2010⁹⁵. In 2011, the *daily* increase in government national debt (PSDN) was around £134m⁹⁶.
- **Problems in the Country:** BSE in cattle was recognized in the UK in 1986. The epidemic reached incredible proportions⁹⁷ - by 1993 there were more than 1,000 cases per week involving more than 50% of the dairy herds in the UK. The sight of burning cattle was sickening. The outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in 2001 caused a crisis in British agriculture and tourism. This saw 2,000 cases of the disease in farms in most of the British countryside. Over 10 million sheep and cattle were killed⁹⁸. In 2012 it was reported that ash die-back disease had arrived in the UK. The *Chalara fraxinea* fungus threatens the survival of some 80 million ash trees in the UK.
- **Drought:** Drought is a recurring feature of the UK climate. Severe drought occurred in medieval times, through the 19th century and into modern times⁹⁹. Recent severe drought occurred in¹⁰⁰ 1949, 1959, 1976, 2003, 2005 and 2011, but these are not regarded as exceptional¹⁰¹. The drying-up of wells and springs had a severe impact

⁸⁹ http://www.hansardsociety.org.uk/blogs/press_releases/archive/2008/03/10/no-overall-control-good-news-or-bad-11-march-2008.aspx

⁹⁰ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2011/may/12/coalition-government-weaker-less-decisive-confused>

⁹¹ <http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/2011/02/18/cam-s-top-10-government-u-turns-115875-22930876/>

⁹² <http://www.debtbombshell.com/history-of-national-debt.htm>

⁹³ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Economic_history_of_the_United_Kingdom

⁹⁴ http://www.google.co.uk/search?q=national+debt+timeline+uk&hl=en&biw=1571&bih=688&rlz=1R2GPEA_en-GB&prmd=ivns&tbs=tl:1&tbo=u&ei=HNXMTfngCseJhQfspbD4DA&sa=X&oi=timeline_result&ct=title&resnum=11&ved=0CE4Q5wIwCg

⁹⁵ <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/cc/nugget.asp?id=277>

⁹⁶ <http://www.creditman.biz/uk/members/news-view.asp?newsviewID=13589>

⁹⁷ <http://www.accessexcellence.org/WN/NM/madcow96.php>

⁹⁸ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2001_United_Kingdom_foot-and-mouth_outbreak

⁹⁹ <http://www.groundwateruk.org/Groundwater-drought-in-the-UK.aspx>

¹⁰⁰ <http://www.topfoto.co.uk/gallery/ukdrought/default.htm>

¹⁰¹ <http://www.icid.org.uk/pdf/research07/marsh.pdf>

throughout the 19th century when the frequency of winters with below average rainfall was greater than it is today.

- **Suffering Children & Elderly:** In 1999 Britain had a higher proportion of children in poverty than any other western European nation. Since then, 600,000 have been lifted above the breadline but Britain is still bottom of the league and about 30% of children remain beneath the breadline¹⁰². A 2007 report published by United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) called "An Overview of Child Well-being" put the UK 21st out of the 21 richest (OECD) countries for child welfare¹⁰³. This ranking draws on 40 separate indicators relevant to children's lives. *Something is wrong with the way Britain is treating her children!* Regarding the elderly, it is claimed that tens of thousands of elderly people are suffering appalling care at the hands of the NHS every year. In 2010 more than 100,000 patients and relatives were forced to issue complaints after being let down by the Health Service¹⁰⁴.
- **Marriage under Fire:** The general decline of marriage has been under way since 1972, with some attributing this to the popularity of cohabitation¹⁰⁵; the proportion of cohabiting couples is increasing¹⁰⁶. Also, divorce was a relatively rare event up to the mid-20th century, but today Britain has one of the highest divorce rates in the world and nearly half of all marriages in England and Wales end in divorce (Office for National Statistics). Family breakdown is at an all-time high.
- **Occupation by an Alien Culture:** The recent rapid growth of Islam in Britain since 1950 poses the question: is there an Islamic agenda to occupy and eventually subdue Britain to Islam? To answer this we need look no further than the fundamental Islamic worldview¹⁰⁷ - the House of Islam and the House of War, the *Dar al-Islam* and the *Dar al-harb*. The *Dar al-Islam* is all those lands in which a Muslim government rules and the Holy Law of Islam prevails. Non-Muslims may live there on Muslim sufferance. The outside world which has not yet been subjugated is called the "House of War," and strictly speaking a perpetual state of *jihad*, of holy war, is imposed by the system of Islamic law, or *Shari'a*. The 1990 Muslim Manifesto¹⁰⁸ for Muslims in Britain affirms this: "*Jihad* is a basic requirement of Islam and living in Britain or having British nationality by birth or naturalisation does not absolve the Muslim from his or her duty to participate in *jihad*." It appears that Islam's message to Britain is: "submit to the will of Allah and accept Shari'a law, or be conquered"¹⁰⁹. A peaceful way of achieving this objective is to use the remnants of Britain's Judaeo-Christian democracy to effectively change it, whilst simultaneously presenting the moderate face of Islam via the concept of multifaith¹¹⁰. If *Dar al-harb* does not apply to Britain, then the many moderate peace-loving Muslims in Britain should ask their Imam to say so! Sadly, Jesus' warning to His followers in John 16.2 suddenly seems very appropriate to Britain!
- **Crushing under a Foreign Yoke:** Britain is not yet under the religious yoke of Islam, but it is already under the secular and humanistic yoke of the EU. Some claim that around 40% of UK law is based on EU legislation and Britain seems to be continuously devolving power to Brussels. There are around 650 new EU laws each year using Statutory Instruments to bypass our UK Parliament¹¹¹, and all this emanating from an unelected European Commission backed by a European Parliament with only the power to "advise and consult"! Some Christians see the increasing dominance of a godless EU as part of the end-time prophetic picture, when a Revived Roman Empire takes world dominance¹¹².
- **Insignificance amongst Nations:** Britain became a 'superpower' in the 18th century and the British Navy dominated the world's oceans until WWII. Today the British Navy is a shadow of its former self¹¹³. Few doubt that Britain is a declining world power and has declining influence in the world. Some see Britain's general decline commencing around 1947¹¹⁴ (and it is interesting to observe that around this time Britain finally reneged on her Mandate for Israel). Certainly, between 1945 and 1965, the number of people under British rule outside

¹⁰² <http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/datablog/2009/sep/11/child-poverty-statistics-uk-countries>

¹⁰³ <http://www.whychurch.org.uk/children.php>

¹⁰⁴ <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1334850/Neglect-shames-Britain-As-complaints-NHS-treatment-elderly-soar-Mail-calls-action.html>

¹⁰⁵ <http://www.thisislondon.co.uk/news/article-23465208-marriage-hits-lowest-rate-since-records-began-almost-150-years-ago.do>

¹⁰⁶ <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/cci/nugget.asp?id=1865>

¹⁰⁷ <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/daralislam.html>

¹⁰⁸ <http://www.muslimparliament.org.uk/MuslimManifesto.pdf>

¹⁰⁹ <http://www.jihadwatch.org/islam-101.html>

¹¹⁰ <http://www.answering-islam.org/Terrorism/agenda.html>

¹¹¹ <http://eurotruth.tripod.com/08.htm>

¹¹² <http://www.seekingtruth.co.uk/europe.htm>

¹¹³ <http://napoleonlive.info/did-you-know/british-military-decline/>

¹¹⁴ <http://www.faqs.org/periodicals/201012/2255093181.html>

the UK itself fell from 700 million to five million¹¹⁵. The merits and sins of such an Empire are debatable, but the fact remains that Britain very rapidly lost her world influence around the middle of the 20th century. This continued at the close of the millennium¹¹⁶ and in 2009 it was claimed: “Over the next decade, Britain's pretensions to be a great power will evaporate ... with rapidly shrinking military and diplomatic influence”¹¹⁷.

4.3 Conclusions

As discussed in Section 2.1, it seems Britain started walking away from the God of Israel around the middle of the 20th century (some even identify it as starting with Britain's poor treatment of Israel¹¹⁸). So we might expect God to start judging or at least warning Britain around this time. We might also expect the pattern of warnings or judgements to include some of those applied to the nation Israel in Deut 28. Do we see this?

Taking any one of the above ‘troubles’ on its own e.g. drought would not lead to any particular conclusion on Britain's judgement under God. In fact, drought seems to be statistically irrelevant here. But when a significant number of the troubles identified in Deut 28 seemed to have occurred since the middle of the 20th century, we should sit up and take note. Notably, we can identify national confusion, severe economic problems (resulting in poverty of the young and elderly), record-breaking family breakdown, national farming disasters, rapid and drastic loss of international influence, the growing and crushing dominance of the secular EU, and the rapidly growing influence of Islam with its agenda to place Britain under Shari'a law.

Some will dismiss these events as natural and inevitable in the rise and fall of a nation. Others will suspect something serious is happening to Britain but will do nothing about it. But some will recognise the hand of God in warnings and the potential ‘plucking up’ and ‘pulling down’ (Jer 18) of Britain in judgement.

5. What Can The Church Do About It?

At times of crisis the Church, that body of believers in Christ, have to take their responsibility before God. This is especially true for Christians in Britain. But what is the appropriate action? What is God's Will concerning Britain?

5.1 End-Time Prophecy

Bible prophecy cannot be ignored when it comes to finding God's Will. God has a plan for the nations and we must be careful not to pray and act against it. In particular, is it right to pray for total national restoration, *including* government? Signs of the very end of this age are all around us¹¹⁹ and at this time Isaiah sees deep spiritual darkness over all the earth (Isa 60.2), Daniel 9 and Revelation 13 see a godless end-time world government¹²⁰, and Jesus said that Christians would be hated by all nations for believing in Him (Mat 24.3-14) - *so that must include all national governments*.

It is claimed that no secular world empire has ever been restored to date¹²¹. History saw the destruction of the Egyptian, Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, Greek and Roman Empires and a common thread in their destruction was immorality¹²². The same can be said of the British Empire today – since the middle of the 20th century immorality in Britain has become rife and has to be a contributing factor. According to common prophetic interpretation, there are only two exceptions to empire restoration: the possible restoration of the Roman Empire in the context of the godless end-time world government (Rev 17.10), and the restoration of national Israel (as seen, for example, in the creation of the State of Israel on 14 May 1948¹²³). So there seems little biblical ground for the restoration of Britain to its former status in the world (leaving aside the *bad* aspects of Empire). More importantly, it appears to go

¹¹⁵ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/British_Empire

¹¹⁶ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/10470857>

¹¹⁷ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2009/apr/26/britain-super-power-will-hutton>

¹¹⁸ <http://www.hatikvah.co.uk/productinfo.php?product=200>

¹¹⁹ http://www.seekingtruth.co.uk/end_times.htm

¹²⁰ http://www.seekingtruth.co.uk/world_government.htm

¹²¹ <http://www.wildolive.co.uk/habakuk.htm>

¹²² <http://www.christianindex.org/525.article>

¹²³ <http://www.jewfaq.org/israel.htm>

against Bible prophecy to claim that the British government can be turned from its secular, humanistic stance into a God-fearing, Bible-believing government.

We must add a caveat. Some Christian organisations are standing in the breach and campaigning against bad law and godless activity in Britain (Christian Concern¹²⁴, Barnabas Fund¹²⁵, Christian Voice¹²⁶, Care¹²⁷, Evangelical Alliance¹²⁸ and others). This is entirely biblical – Christians must be salt and light in society, as in the days of Knox, Wesley, Wilberforce and Mary Whitehouse. Britain needs its Christian MPs. But it seems against the biblical theme to expect such campaigning to radically change a secular government. Jesus never tried to change the pagan Roman government, but He worked despite it.

5.2 National Repentance

There *is* hope for Britain. Even if there seems a weak biblical case for the restoration of the national government there certainly seems hope for Britain's *people*. There *are* signs of Christians waking up and getting onto the streets with Christ's love. Some churches *are* growing. Recall God's promise to *secular* (gentile or heathen) nations:

"The instant I speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, to pull down, and to destroy it, if that nation against whom I have spoken turns from its evil, I will relent of the disaster that I thought to bring upon it." (Jer 18.7,8)

This shows the compassionate face of the God of Israel, even when a nation like Britain is in rebellion against Him. He showed national Israel similar compassion:

"If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land." (2 Chron 7.14)

What is being said in these verses? In Jer 18 God is speaking to *all* the people of a gentile nation. He is not primarily speaking to its leaders, although they must be included. The promise is not nation-specific and so it applies to Britain today. In 2 Chron 7 God is speaking to His people Israel, and many argue that it also applies to the Church today since it is 'spiritual Israel', being grafted into the tree of OT Israel (Rom 11). It is clear from these verses that avoidance of national disaster and the healing of a nation is *conditional*: people must first repent of evil ways.

So it seems God's Will is for Britain's Christians, a faithful 'remnant', to humble themselves in prayer, seeking the Lord's forgiveness and mercy for the failings of both Church and government, and praying for the Holy Spirit to turn the British people to repentance. Who knows – this may start revivals as seen in Britain in the early 20th century!

¹²⁴ <http://www.christianconcern.com/>

¹²⁵ <http://barnabasfund.org/UK/Home/>

¹²⁶ <http://www.christianvoice.org.uk/>

¹²⁷ <http://www.care.org.uk/advocacy/equality>

¹²⁸ <http://www.eauk.org/about/getinvolved/index.cfm>

5.3 Guidelines for how the Church should intercede for Britain

- Our cry to the Lord should include a confession of the sins of Britain (see Section 3.2). The prophets did this for sinful and rebellious Israel (Neh 1.6,7)(Hab 1.1-4)(Dan 9.3-15) and the Church should do this for Britain.
- The Church itself needs to repent. The Institutionalised Church in particular is guilty of compromise in the form of political correctness. It has sometimes gone along with the fudge of multifaith and universalism. Faced with the rapid growth of Islam and other faiths, it has not always upheld the uniqueness of Christ as the one and only Mediator between man and God (Jn 14.6). Whilst working alongside other faiths in day-to-day business, at the end of the day it must maintain that:

“All should honour the Son just as they honour the Father. He who does not honour the Son does not honour the Father who sent Him.” (Jn 5.23)

- Daniel prayed on behalf of rebellious Israel, but relied upon *God’s mercy* rather than resting on Israel’s righteous deeds (Dan 9.18). So although God appears to have used Britain in the past to translate and then spread His word worldwide through evangelism, the Church cannot rest on its laurels! It simply seeks God’s mercy upon Britain.
- The Church should be wary of using man’s way to spread the gospel. Repentance is the domain of the Holy Spirit and the Church should pray for an outpouring of the Spirit upon each person in Britain, especially those of other faiths and none:

“When He has come He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness and of judgement” (Jn 16.8)

- Most people suspect things ‘aren’t quite right’ with Britain, but they don’t associate this with how far Britain has moved from God. Pray that the Holy Spirit will reveal the sins of Britain (Section 3.2) to the British people. Pray that people will be pulled from godless lifestyles into Christ’s Kingdom. Jesus is looking for a holy, righteous nation within a nation! (1 Pet 2.9,10):

“And I heard another voice from heaven saying. ‘Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins. And lest you receive of her plagues.” (Rev 18.4)

In practice this may mean changing work practices and particular types of work, avoidance of corrupting media output, abstaining from teenage sex, working harder at marriage, less materialism and living for pleasure, seeking out truth on real issues, and so on.

- Pray for Britain’s children (see also Section 5.4). Ask God to overrule what is being taught in school in the areas of sexuality, sex and contraception, evolution and creation, and abortion. Pray for a restoration of parental authority.
- The church should not shy away from warning people of the danger of judgement falling upon Britain. Jesus didn’t mince His words when he spoke to rebellious cities (Mat 11.20-24). Pray that God will raise up people to speak the truth to Britain in a reasoned, Spirit-led way and that they will be given a media platform to do this.
- Pray for those Christian organisations which are acting as salt and light in the nation, confronting government and councils over bad law and godless actions.
- Ask for God’s mercy for how badly Britain has treated the Israeli people. Britain illegally traded parts of Palestine away from the Jews and deliberately introduced legislation which virtually blocked Jewish immigration exactly when they most needed it. Britain eventually failed on her Mandate to establish a Jewish homeland and today generally takes an anti-Israel stance.
- These types of prayer enter the realm of spiritual warfare and so the Church must pray for protection and strength (Eph 6). Christians who speak out will be targeted and persecuted under Britain’s new laws. Jesus predicted this scenario for His followers (Mat 24.9).

5.4 The Urgency – At Least Pray for Britain’s Children

We might ask ‘Why the urgency for prayer?’ It has taken just two generations for Britain to fall from grace, and the moral, idolatrous and economic decline continues. Time is not on Britain’s side and she may already be under judgement. A time may come when God gives up on Britain as He did on rebellious Judah and says to Christians:

“Do not pray for this people, and do not lift up cry or prayer for them, and do not intercede with Me; for I do not hear you. Do you not see what they are doing in the cities ...” (Jer 7.16,17)

In particular, we should pray *for the sake of our children*. Jesus warned against misleading children (Mat 18.6), but Britain is leading her children in the wrong direction. She is feeding them lies and creating a harsh and poverty-stricken child environment that is one of the worst in Europe. Do we really want our children to be nurtured in values, knowledge and vision by a nation that:

- Is morally and economically bankrupt, with its leaders advocating homosexuality and its debt increasing by some £134m each day?
- Is at the bottom of the league of Western European countries in terms of child overall ‘well-being’ (material, health, family, educational etc.). That is: 21st out of the 21 richest (OECD) countries for child welfare in 2007?
- Prefers to teach its children Darwinian evolution; that is - we are here by chance and death is the end. Whilst many see great enjoyment and purpose in life, this philosophy offers no *deep* purpose or long-term hope?
- Teaches its children that same-sex sexual relationships are OK, and permits gay couples to adopt children despite the proved increased health risk to children living within such a relationship?
- Puts choice above morality, and so offers its teenagers contraceptive advice, usually without parental knowledge?
- Cannot control the increasing sexually transmitted infections (STIs) amongst its school children?
- Aborts some 200,000 human beings a year and arranges teenage abortions via sexual health clinics in schools?
- Teaches its children that all truth is relative or culture-based and there is no such thing as absolute truth?
- Plays down the uniqueness of Christianity and replaces it with a cocktail of beliefs, most of which reject biblical truth and lead people into idolatry?
- Has abandoned most of its Judeo-Christian values and whose well-tried system of justice (Habeas Corpus) is under threat from Europe?

If the answer is ‘no’, then the Church must pray that our children are saved from being corrupted by a morally bankrupt nation and that they are drawn out to become citizens of heaven, in Christ’s eternal Kingdom!

We end with a recording of Duncan Campbell, recalling the night in 1949 when revival fell on the Hebridean Islands, Western Scotland:

<http://www.charismatica.com/2008/10/28/hebridean-revival-1949-an-incredible-account/>
