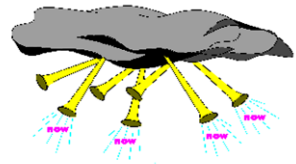
TRUMPET SOUNDS



Issue No 152 3rd Quarter 2024

The Great Surprise

"But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only. Matthew 24: 36.

Although I do not hold a pre-tribulation point of view on the rapture of the church, it is clear to me that an essential element of the 'Second Coming' of Christ is 'surprise'.

We do not know when Jesus will return. There are signs that it will not be long but the exact time remains hidden. Not even the angels have been let into this secret. The question arises, why is it necessary to keep the time of the return of Jesus hidden?

Couldn't Jesus have said that once certain tasks had been completed He would come back? In fact He did say that once the gospel had been preached in all the world the end of the age would come (Matthew 24: 14). That may narrow down the time frame but we still don't know when He will return. He could have given us more warning signs to let us know that His return is imminent. There are some broad signs that the end of the age is near. The return of the Jews to Israel to resurrect their former nation being the most significant. We are in the closing years of this present age but we still don't know exactly when Jesus will return.

A thief

We read in 1Thessalonians 5:2 that *"… the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night".* A thief avoids announcing his presence. Secrecy is key to success. In the same way, when Jesus comes again He will take the world by surprise. Currently most mock or discard the idea of Jesus' return. It is regarded as a fable on the lines of the return of King Arthur. Even in the church one wonders how many truly believe it. Peter foresaw a time when scoffers would mock saying *"where is the promise of His coming?"* 2 Peter 3: 4.

If the world knew the date of his coming what difference would it make? For 120 years Noah was building the Ark. It was a visible warning of coming judgment. Any who joined Noah's family in the Ark would have been saved. None joined Noah. They were swept away in the flood. Likewise when Jesus comes again the world will be like in the days of Noah (Matthew 24: 37). Many

will be carrying on with life as normal. Even if they knew the date when Jesus would return it will be ignored as a nonsense fable.

If Christians knew the day and hour of Christ's Second Coming, would we become complacent? We might tell ourselves that there was plenty of time to complete the tasks assigned to us. What would have been the effect on the church if it had known from the start that Jesus would not be coming back for many centuries?

Instead of telling us the date Jesus told us to watch. If we watch we will be ready. His coming will not surprise us. We may not know the exact time but we long for *"the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ",* Titus 2: 13. We must watch and guard against the deceptions of false prophets and false christs (Matthew 24: 24). We are to be faithful servants always ready to welcome our Lord when He comes.

"Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he be naked and they see His shame." Revelation 16:15. In these last days Satan will endeavour to deceive and draw into his kingdom those who have faith in Christ. If he can destroy faith in Christ he will be victorious. Our garments are the righteousness of Christ. *"I am coming as a thief"* is a reminder to keep watch and not be deceived by Satan. If we listen to his lies he will draw us back into the world. Our righteousness, imputed to us by Christ, will be lost if we listen to Satan. If the garments of righteousness are lost we will be naked in the sight of Christ and unworthy of His kingdom. That the appearing of Christ, although expected, will be a surprise is good for the church. Down all the centuries it has kept the true body of believers focused on their calling.

There is possibly another reason for the surprise element to Jesus' return.

"But know this that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect." Matthew 24: 43 – 44.

As we have seen, Jesus describes His coming as like a thief. Therefore in this verse we could understand that the thief is Jesus. If that is accepted we could also interpret the 'master of the house' as Satan. Elsewhere he is called the god of this age who has blinded the eyes of all the unbelieving (2 Corinthians 4: 4). Jesus referred to Satan as the ruler of this world (John 12: 31, 16: 11). Having blinded people to the truth the devil is able to reign over their deceived minds.

In Matthew 24: 43 it is not people who are taken by surprise. It is the master of the house (Satan) who is caught off guard. In any battle, surprise is a powerful weapon. Catching the enemy off guard is a key step in achieving the final victory.

Revelation 12 tells us that warfare breaks out in heaven. Michael and his angels fight the dragon (Satan) and defeat him. He is cast down to the earth. That battle continues on earth as Satan stirs the world up to war. It is into this situation that Jesus intervenes. When He comes, Jesus will first rescue His followers and then return to earth to defeat the nations of the world which are gathered against Israel. The breaking into the house by Jesus is a representation of the rapture. According to Matthew 24: 43, if the master of the house knew when the thief would come, he would not have let his house be broken into. It is for our safety and release that Satan is taken by surprise.

"Therefore you also be ready for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect". Matthew 24: 44

The primary teaching of Jesus, with regard to his return, is to watch and always be ready. Even if we believe that Scripture points to the rapture following the tribulation we should still live in the expectancy of his soon return. Because God is going to catch Satan off guard, I am inclined to think that there are key elements of end time prophecy which the Lord has not revealed. Elements which when understood would enable everything to fall into place. But for the present we are to, *"Watch therefore for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming".* Matthew 24: 42

Assurance

As the present age comes to an end, Satan, will use all his power to draw Christians away from their faith. Jesus warned that, *"..false christs and false prophets will arise and show signs and wonders to deceive, if possible even the elect."* Mark 13: 22. The primary intention of these false prophets is to deceive and draw away those who trust in Christ. The rest of the world Satan has deceived already.

When Satan tempted Jesus, twice he used the words *"if you are the Son of God"* Matthew 4: 3, 6. After forty days of fasting Jesus' human body was frail. The Bible records that He was hungry. Satan uses this frailty to try to make Him to doubt His divinity. '**If'** is one of Satan's favourite words.

In the same way in these last days when we will be subject to many attacks and pressures Satan will seek to cause us to doubt our position with the Father.

Our assurance of salvation will be one of the things he attacks. There are many many ways in which Satan will attempt to cause us to doubt.

He will tell us that we are not worthy, which of course is true. We are not worthy but God *"… made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God."* 2 Corinthians 5: 21

He will tell us that we haven't truly repented because we still sin. As Christians we are works in progress. Under our old nature our natural state was to sin. When we are born again we receive a new nature whose nature is obedience to God. The first letter of John explains that we have received a new nature which does not sin but if we do sin we have an *"Advocate with the Father"* 1 John 1: 5 – 2: 2.

He will tell us that we haven't done enough to be saved. Which once again is true. None of us can ever do enough to be saved. That is why it has to be a gift from God. *"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and not of yourselves; it is the gift of God."* Ephesians 2: 8.

Our assurance never relies on what we do. If it is up to us, relying on our own strength, none would endure to the end. Assurance always relies on God's promise and God cannot lie (Titus 1: 2). God is able to keep us. *"Now unto Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy. To God our Saviour, who alone is wise, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen."* Jude 24 – 25.

"If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." Romans 10: 9.

Roman Catholicism

Is it the true church, an imperfect church or an apostate church?

In this series on Bishop J C Ryle's Prophetic Creed we come to a controversial item. At the time he wrote his creed, few in England outside the Roman Catholic Church would have doubted that the Roman Church was apostate.

The Westminster Confession states it very clearly, "There is no other head of the Church but the Lord Jesus Christ; nor can the Pope of Rome, in any sense, be head thereof; but is that Antichrist, that man of sin, and son of perdition, that exalts himself, in the Church, against Christ and all that is called God." Chapter 25 clause vi.

This understanding of the Pope and the Catholic Church is echoed in Ryle's next item of his creed, "I BELIEVE that the Roman Catholic Church is the great predicted apostasy from the faith, and is Babylon and Antichrist, although I think it highly probable that a more complete development of Antichrist will yet be exhibited to the world. (2 Thessalonians 2:3 - 11; 1 Timothy 4:1 - 3)."

Times have changed

How times have changed. Today many 'evangelical' leaders actively seek the endorsement of Rome. Some years ago 'Christianity Today' carried an article headed "From Antichrist to Brother in Christ, How Protestant Pastors view the Pope". The article drew on a survey of opinions among Southern Baptist in the United States. Fifty eight percent of 'evangelical' pastors viewed the Pope as a brother in Christ.

The Church of England has for many years sought union with Rome. We have seen several former Bishops of the Church of England convert to Rome.

The Roman Church has been transformed in perception from agent of Satan to acceptable co-worker in the cause of Christ! Was Ryle and most of his contemporaries deceived or is it today's church leaders who are closing their eyes to the truth?

What has brought about this change of perception? Has there been a dramatic change within the Roman Church causing the transformation from a pariah to valued brother?

Prayer to Mary

Soon after moving to our present home, nearly 40 years ago, I attended a joint churches prayer meeting. It is the only time I have stopped a prayer meeting mid flow. I spoke up when the Roman Catholic priest, a monk from the local monastery, started praying to Mary. I learned later that he regularly took pilgrimages to Medjugorje in the Balkans where there had supposedly been apparitions of Mary.

Purgatory

On different occasion I was talking to another monk from the monastery. He said that he had been asked if the Roman Catholic Church still believed in purgatory. He made an emphatic statement that of course it believed in purgatory. To which I replied, tongue in cheek, what a shame Catholics have to go to purgatory, while Protestants go straight to heaven. To which he batted back, *"in a twinkling of an eye."* The point being that he knew the Bible but preferred the doctrines of his church.

This illustrates that, while we can be friendly to members of the Roman Church, there remains a deep gulf between us. The true evangelical, who holds to a high view of the Scripture, understands that there is a conflict of authority. The doctrines of the Roman church in places conflict with the teaching of the Bible. The most important of these conflicts is the basis of our salvation. For the Protestant, salvation is by faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross. For the Catholic salvation comes through the sacraments of the Church.

Has Rome changed?

Many will respond that since the Second Vatican Council things have changed within the Catholic Church. It is much more open to dialogue with Protestants and encourages Catholics to read their Bible. Going back to around the same time as that prayer meeting, I decided to check for myself. I borrowed a copy of 'Sources of Renewal'. It was Carol Wojtyla's commentary on the Second Vatican Council. Carol Wojtyla, from Poland, later became Pope John Paul II. Reading the book gave no reassurance that anything had changed. According to 'Sources of Renewal' I, as one of the separated brethren, still needed to be drawn back into the Roman Church if I was to be saved. True I was regarded as nearer to the truth than a Muslim or Hindu but not close enough.

Rome continues to tolerate practices which should be condemned outright. Article 22 of the Church of England headed "Of Purgatory", reads, "The Romish Doctrine concerning Purgatory, Pardons, Worshipping, and Adoration, as well of Images as of Reliques, and also invocation of Saints, is a fond thing vainly invented, and grounded upon no warranty of Scripture, but rather repugnant to the Word of God." My encounters with the monks who believe in purgatory or pilgrimages to Medjugorje illustrate that these practices, far from being condemned, are still encouraged.

Development of Antichrist

At the same time as Ryle published his Prophetic Creed, Andrew Bonar published the "Development of Antichrist." In that book he drew the important distinction between 'an Antichrist' and 'the Antichrist". Bonar was in no way endorsing the Church of Rome. He was pointing out that the Antichrist is a distinct person who will be revealed at the end of this age. The 'man of sin' in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-12 is not a succession of Popes, but an individual who the Lord will consume at His coming.

"Little children it is the last hour; and as you have heard the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come by which you will know it is the last hour." 1 John 2: 18. An Antichrist is a person who supplants Jesus. He

denies that Jesus is the Christ who is God in human form. There have been and will be many such deceivers in the world. Ryle stated in his creed, “I think it highly probable that a more complete development of Antichrist will yet be exhibited to the world.” Today that is our expectation.

If the Pope is not the final antichrist, ‘man of sin’, the question remains is he an antichrist and is the Roman Church, Babylon the Great Mother of Harlots?

At this point we have to hang our heads in shame. In Ryle’s time, despite many imperfections the protestant church was clear in its doctrine and the sovereignty of the Bible. Today it is as apostate as the Church of Rome. It has discarded the Bible and accepted many false doctrines. How can we point the finger at Rome when our own house needs to be put in order?

The definition of Babylon the Great has to be broadened. Beside Rome it needs to include all the apostate protestant churches. The definition of Babylon is broader still, it represents the kingdom of this world in rebellion against our creator. Fickle Protestantism and wayward Rome are both just part.

All roads lead to Rome

How is it that many who are regarded as leading evangelicals are making tracks to Rome?

It has come about following a change of emphasis from biblical doctrine to the experiential and mystical within evangelicalism. Bishop Ryle was concerned that people heard the truth and repented of their sin so that they could be saved. Today the message is the need to experience God and get along with everyone. When it comes to experiencing God the Roman Catholic Church has much to offer. It offers an array of religious practices going right back to the Church fathers.

From my contacts with the Benedictine monks from the local monastery, I know that they advocate a system of contemplative prayer claimed to originate with Benedict, the founder of the order. It involves controlled breathing and starting with a verse from the Bible using meditation to reduce the focus of the mind down to one word. All distractions are removed and in this neutral state it is hoped to hear the voice of God. The Bible does not advocate this approach to prayer which has its roots in eastern mysticism and appeals to those who seek experience instead of truth. It is also very dangerous as, like Yoga, it can bring a person into contact with demons.

Unity first

For many evangelicals the quest for unity has become pre-eminent. Doctrinal divisions are looked on as distractions from the greater need to be united. But

sound doctrine is about truth and truth is about salvation. One brother expressed it to me as a love for our neighbour has taken precedence over love for God.

The gospel of salvation teaches us that Christ died for our sins, that He was buried and raised on the third day. We are saved by faith in the efficacy of His shed blood to cover our guilt and cleanse us from sin. The Catechism of the Catholic Church adds to this other requirements such as baptism within the Catholic Church and receiving the sacraments of the Catholic Church. This is another gospel.

An apostate church

In answer to the question at the head of this article, all churches are imperfect. They are imperfect because they are made up of imperfect human beings. But Rome goes beyond the imperfect. It adds teachings which are contrary to the Bible. In so doing it lays stumbling blocks in the way of those who seek the truth. Therefore it remains a church which has to be regarded as apostate.

An intervention by God. On the 13/14th April Iran launched a missile attack on Israel. I commented on it in the last issue of Trumpet Sounds. What my comments didn't do was to give the glory to God for so few missiles getting through. Even with the advanced warning enabling preparations to counter the attack, it is still remarkable that so few missiles reached their target and caused so little damage. For that we give thanks to God

Judgement followed by mercy.

At the end of April some Household Cavalry horses were spooked and rampaged through London. It was widely reported at the time and made the news around the world. On the same day Big Ben struck 11 time just after 10.00 am.

Most of the pictures show two of the horses. A black horse named Quaker in the front followed by a blood stained white horse called Vida. Two months later another three black horses were spooked by a bus. Two threw their riders and with a third, being led, broke away to charge through the streets of London. It is remarkable that such a rare event should reoccur in such a short space of time.

Many see the black horses on the loose galloping through London as a warning of coming judgment; coupled with Big Ben chiming a warning that we have reached the eleventh hour.

There is an interpretation of the events, which focuses on the two horses which made most of the News. Quaker represents shaking; the nation is about

to be shaken. Vida is the Spanish for life. The black horse of judgment will be followed by a bloodstained white horse, called life, representing the gospel. After the shaking will come the gospel giving the opportunity for many to receive new life.

UK's new government

Following the election on the 4th July Britain has a new Government with a huge majority in the House of Commons. The Labour Party won 411 seats giving it an overall working majority of 181. Although Kier Starmer will treat this as a mandate to govern his vote share was small. In this election Labour received only 9,698,409 votes. In 2017 Labour led by Jeremy Corbyn won 12,877,918 votes. But did not gain a majority in Parliament.

The new Prime Minister heads up the most left wing government in the country's history. Melanie Phillips commented, "Moreover, while he (Starmer) will be economically cautious he'll let rip on the "culture wars". The result will be more transgender abuses of children and women and more demonisation of white people and British "colonialism". He's also likely to outlaw "Islamophobia" which could have an even greater chilling effect on necessary discussion of Muslim antisemitism or Islamic terrorism than is currently the case. The rumour that the veteran "human rights" ideologue Harriet Harman is to become head of the Equalities and Human Rights Commission in place of Baroness Falkner, who has bravely tried to counter the transgender lunacy, chills the bone."

"Starmer is also committed to an insane acceleration of the already ruinous Net Zero target, and to developing "ever closer" ties with the EU which will further stifle the entrepreneurial freedoms that Brexit enabled but the Tory government never delivered."

I think that we can safely say that, before the end of the coming parliament there will be severe legal restrictions on what Christians can say and what can be preached in church. Charitable status will be removed from churches and Christian organisations which don't endorse the current secular philosophy. Islam will be granted special status particularly in regard to blasphemy laws and the nation will adopt a hostile relationship with Israel.

Labour and Israel

The ongoing relationship between the UK and Israel looks bleak. According to the Independent newspaper, on the Sunday after the election Starmer spoke to Palestinian Authority leader Mahmoud Abbas. He told Abbas that the Palestinians had a right to a Palestinian state and financial support for the

Palestinian Authority was a priority. It does not appear that there were any conditions placed on this financial support. Conditions such as the refraining of teaching children to hate Jews or using the finance to support terrorists and their families. Starmer went on to tell Netanyahu that there was a clear and urgent need for a cease fire in Gaza. He also said that Israel must proceed with caution with regard to the threat from Hezbollah.

Kier Starmer has appointed a number of people who are against Israel to key positions in the government.

David Lammy, the new Foreign Secretary, is being pressed to release the legal advice received by the last Government on arms sales to Israel. Before the election He expressed serious concerns about the conduct of Israel's military in Gaza. He also supports the request to the International Criminal Court to issue arrest warrants for Netanyahu and Gallant.

The previous Conservative government under Rishi Sunak had submitted a preliminary legal argument to the ICC to demonstrate that it had no jurisdiction to issue these warrants. The court had given Britain until July 12 to submit its full claim. The new Labour government will let this fall by the wayside.

The new Lord Chancellor and Justice Secretary is Shabina Mahmood. She is a long standing supporter of Boycott Sanctions and Disinvestment (BDS). In the past she has accused Israel of collective punishment of the people of Gaza, and of failing to provide humanitarian aid. She claimed that the conduct of the war was intolerable and Israel was committing disproportionate attacks on innocent people.

The Attorney General is Richard Hermer KC. He is a radical left wing barrister who belongs to a Reformed synagogue. In 'All Israel News', chief executive of UK Lawyers for Israel (UKLFI), Jonathan Turner KC. commented, ""Richard Hermer KC provided a seriously inaccurate opinion to the Labour Party on the last government's Bill to ban BDS by public authorities and refused to correct it even after I pointed out the inaccuracies, I view his appointment with great misgiving."

The Muslim Party

This election saw a new phenomenon in UK politics: a coordinated campaign, run by a group called The Muslim Vote (MV) to get Muslims voting en bloc exclusively on Islamic issues. The MV acted as a political party, but failed to register as such, thus avoiding the scrutiny that other parties face. Four independent candidates sponsored by The Muslim Vote, along with 45 other party-aligned candidates endorsed by them, were elected. Jeremy Corbyn was

elected as an independent. That makes at least 50 MPs who are pro-Palestine in the new parliament. Though Labour performed well overall, it did poorly in areas with high Muslim populations. Tim Dieppe of Christian Concern expects that "by the next election we will have an Islamic political party in Great Britain. …I also expect to see mainstream political parties adopting Islamic policies to try to win the support of the Muslim vote. Islam is now a political force in this country. It is here to stay and is bold and unashamed in its demands." From Prophecy today newsletter 12.07.24

During the election there were numerous attacks by Muslims on Labour candidates. The hostility was due to Keir Starmer, after 7th October, saying that Israel had a right to defend itself.

In the Birmingham Yardley constituency Labour's Jess Phillips, who only narrowly kept her seat under pressure from this "Gaza" lobby, was met with boos and jeers as she made an angry acceptance speech in which she denounced the "aggression and violence" in "the worst election I have ever stood in". All this is entirely foreign to British democratic traditions and does not bode well.

Labour MP's who strongly support Palestine include Apsana Begum who has accused Israel of "oppression and brutality". Sectarian Islamic politics have become part of the British political scene.

A Palestinian State

In May, Spain, Ireland and Norway formally recognised a Palestinian state. They said that it was an attempt to refocus attention on finding a political solution to the war in the Middle East. They hope that their action will push other European countries to join them in this diplomatic effort.

Yolanda Diaz the Deputy Prime Minister of Spain in announcing Spain's recognition of a Palestinian State ended her speech with the words 'from the river to the sea Palestine will be free'. Was she in complete ignorance that she was calling for the destruction of the state of Israel or does she just hate Jews?

God's judgment on Norway, Ireland and Spain, (and any other country which joins them) for recognising a Palestinian state will be Islam. That punishment also hangs over the UK if we, as is likely with the new government, follow them in this blatant support for terrorism.

On his recent visit to Israel David Lammy demanded an immediate cease fire, unrestricted aid into Gaza and a halt on expanding what he called illegal settlements in the West Bank. He also spoke of an early recognition of a Palestinian State. It does not bode well for Britain.

No more Trust by Aviel Shnider Editor of Israel today

"Israelis have lost faith that they can ever live in peace with the Palestinians. I have been hearing this more and more over the past eight months. Especially from my adult children and their friends. A generation that will ultimately have to take Israel's future into its own hands. I also hear it from colleagues and friends from all walks of life. October 7th has destroyed all remaining trust. Not only in Arabs, but also in other peoples. Israelis are losing faith and trust in other people, especially at a time when the world does not understand Israel's right to defend itself. Israel is being asked to do impossible things, such as restraint and love in war, which other nations do not ask of themselves, and this makes Israelis frustrated and angry."

Genetic Entropy

The following are quotes from Genetic Entropy by Dr J C Stanford. John Stanford was a Professor at Cornell University for more than 25 years. His most significant scientific contributions during that time were the invention of the biolistic (gene gun) process, pathogen-derived resistance and genetic immunization. The gene gun is the mechanism which allows genetic engineering. The following quotes underline the incredible complexity of life.

"During the last half century, the scientific enterprise has opened up a door into an almost surrealistic, Lilliputian realm of self-replicating robotic manufacturing plants, with components whirring at tens of thousands of RPM, automated parcel addressing, transport and distribution systems and complex monitoring and feedback control systems. Of course, this is the realm of cell and molecular biology. It is a realm in which tens of thousands of different kinds of sophisticated nano machines perform incredible chemical feats inside the living cell. Above and beyond this cellular complexity is the equally complex realm of the organism, with trillions of cells working in astonishing coordination, and above that is the realm of the brain with its multiplied trillions of neural connections. Confronted with such staggering complexity, the reflective person naturally asks, "How did all this come to exist?"" Page i para 1

"An organisms genome is the sum total of all its genetic parts, including all its chromosomes, genes, and nucleotides. A genome is an instruction manual that specifies a particular form of life. The human genome is a manual that instructs human cells to be human cells and the human body to be the human body. There is no information system designed by man that can even begin to compare to the simplest genome in complexity." Page 1 para 1

"A complete human genome consists of two sets of 3 billion individual letter each." Page 2 para 3.

"The genome is not a simple string of letters spelling out a linear series of instructions. It actually embodies multiple linear codes that overlap and constitute an exceedingly sophisticated information system embodying what is called data compression."

In addition to multiple, overlapping, linear, language-like forms of genetic information, the genome is full of countless loops and branches like a computer program. It has genes that regulate genes that regulate genes. It has genes that sense changes in the environment and then instruct other genes to react by setting in motion complex cascades of events that can respond to the environmental cue. Some genes actively rearrange themselves, or modify and methylate other gene sequences, basically changing portions of the instruction manual!

Lastly, there is good evidence that linear DNA can fold into two and three-dimensional structures (as do proteins and RNAs) and that such folding probably encodes still higher levels of information. Within the typical non dividing nucleus, there is reason to believe there may be fabulously complex three-dimensional arrays of DNA whose 3-D structure controls higher biological functions. Page 3 para 2, 3, 4

All this information is contained within a genomic package that is in turn, contained within the cell's nucleus – a space much smaller than a speck of dust. Each human body contains a galaxy of cells – more than 100 trillion – and every one of these cells has a complete set of instructions and its own highly prescribed duties. The human genome not only specifies the complexity of our cells and our bodies, but also the functioning of our brains. The structure and organisation of our brains involves a level of organisation entirely beyond our comprehension.

As we recognize the higher-order dimensions of the genome, I believe that we can readily agree with Carl Sagan's oft-repeated statement that each cell contains more information that the Library of Congress. Indeed, human life is more complex that all human technologies combined! **Where did all this information come from, and how can it possibly be maintained? This is the mystery of the genome.** Page 4 para 2, 3.

John Stanford knows the answer to that question. The only plausible explanation of the complexity of life is a creator God. Life is a mind blowing achievement for which all the glory must be given to God.

The Parusia of Christ

"….that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep." 1Thessalonians 4: 15. At the coming of the Lord we who are still alive will be caught up to be meet Him in the air. There is much debate as to whether the trajectory of travel from then on is heaven ward or earth ward. Are we caught up to rejoice with Christ in heaven or to return and reign with Him on earth? In his book, 'Light from the Ancient East' (1908) Adolf Deissmann proposed that the word Parusia, translated in the verse above as 'coming', was a technical term widely understood in Greek culture to refer to the coming of a king or other important person.

The following quotes are from 'Light from the Ancient East' Pages 368 – 373.

"Yet another of the central ideas of the oldest Christian worship receives light from the new texts, viz. irapovaia, "advent, coming," a word expressive of the most ardent hopes of a St. Paul. We may now say that the best interpretation of the Primitive Christian hope of the Parusia is the old Advent text, "Behold, thy King cometh unto thee." From the Ptolemaic period down into the 2nd cent. AD we are able to trace the word in the East as a technical expression for the arrival or the visit of the king or the emperor. The parusia of the sovereign must have been something well known even to the people, as shown by the facts that special payments in kind and taxes to defray the cost of the parusia were exacted, that in Greece a new era was reckoned from the parusia of the Emperor Hadrian, that all over the world advent-coins were struck after a parusia of the emperor, and that we are even able to quote examples of advent-sacrifices."

Deissmann refers to various ancient manuscripts which show that a Parusia was a widely understood event. A petition dated 113 BC was found in the wrappings of the mummy of a sacred crocodile. "A parusia of King Ptolemy, the second who called himself Soter ("saviour "), is expected, and for this occasion a great requisition has been issued for corn, which is being collected at Cerceosiris by the village headman and the elders of the peasants. Speaking of this and another delivery of corn, these officials say . . . . . and applying ourselves diligently, both night and day, unto fulfilling that which was set before us and the provision of 80 artabae which was imposed for the parusia of the king . . . "

"Again among the Tebtunis Papyri there is a bill, from the end of the 2nd cent. B.C., which mentions "the parusia of the king," while an ostracon of the 2nd cent. B.C., from Thebes, reckons the expenses of the "parusia of the queen." As in Egypt, so also in Europe and Asia: the uniformity of Hellenistic civilisation is proved once more in this instance."

“An inscription of the 3rd cent. B.C. at Olbia * mentions a parusia of King Saitapharnes, the expenses of which were a source of grave anxiety to the city fathers, until a rich citizen, named Protogenes, paid the sum 900 pieces of gold, which were presented to the king. Next comes an example of great importance as proving an undoubted sacral use of the word, viz. an inscription of the 3rd cent. B.C., recording a cure at the temple of Asclepius at Epidaurus, which mentions a parusia of the healer (saviour) god Asclepius.”

“Other examples of Hellenistic age known to me are a passage in Polybius referring to a parusia of King Antiochus the Great, and two letters of King Mithradates VI. Eupator of Pontus at the beginning of his first war with the Romans, 88 B.C., recorded' in an inscription at Nysa in Caria. The prince, writing to Leonippus the Praefect of Caria, makes twofold mention of his own parusia, i.e. his invasion of the province of Asia. "It is the legitimate continuation of the Hellenistic usage that in the Imperial period the parusia of the sovereign should shed a special brilliancci.”

“In memory of the visit of the Emperor Nero, in whose reign St. Paul wrote his letters to Corinth, the cities of Corinth and Patras struck adventcoins. Adventus Aug{usti) Cor{inthi) is the legend on one, Adventus Augusti on the other. Here we have corresponding to the Greek parusia the Latin word advent, which the Latin Christians afterwards simply took over, and which is to-day familiar to every child among us. How graphically it must have appealed to the Christians of Thessalonica, with their living conception of the parusiae of the rulers of this world, when they read in St. Paul's second letter of the Satanic " parusia " of Antichrist, who was to be destroyed by "the manifestation of the parusia" of the Lord Jesus! “

The above understanding of the significance of a Parusia is a strong argument for the trajectory of travel, once the Lord has gathered those who are still alive, as earthward. When an emperor or other important person made an official visit, the chief citizens of the city would go out to meet him. They would then accompany him back to the city. In the same way at the Parusia of Christ we will all, both the transformed living and resurrected dead, accompany Jesus back to earth to receive His throne. We will be part of the armies of heaven which come to overthrow the Beast and his empire. As Christ’s brethren we will be commissioned to bring in His reign of peace, righteousness and justice.

The opening article of this newsletter recognises that Christ’s return will be a surprise. We are to remain awake and keep ‘watch'. From that glorious day of Christ’s parusia onward, wherever Jesus is, we will be with Him. Hallelujah.

Iran Election

Following the death in a helicopter crash of former President Ebrahim Raisi, Iran has elected a new president. Masoud Pezeshkian has been hailed as a 'moderate' and reformist in much of the worlds press. This characterisation is very misleading to the Western mind.

'Reformists' are one of the factions in the Islamic Republic's ruling elite. The 'Reformists' are Islamists like their conservative rivals. They are distinguished from the 'Conservatives' by a slightly more moderate version of the regimes ideology. In the past they called for a freer and more democratic society. The call for greater democracy was absent from Pezeshkian's 2024 campaign.

In his campaign Pezeshkian said that he wanted to negotiate with the West to end the nuclear standoff and ease sanctions. But Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei criticised these ideas saying they were deluded.

Khamenei is the main decision maker in Iran. Therefore no change is possible without his agreement. Following the election there will be no change in policy toward Israel.

Pezeshkian is no friend of Israel. He has said that "God willing we will try to have friendly relations with all countries except Israel." He has also assured Hassan Nasrallah, head of Hezbollah, "The Islamic Republic has always supported the resistance of the people of the region against the illegitimate Zionist regime, I am certain that the resistance movements in the region will not allow this regime to continue its warmongering and criminal policies against the oppressed people of Palestine and other nations of the region."

If people in the West are hoping that there may be real reform in Iran and a genuine change in relations, they will be disappointed.

Web Site: **www.trumpetsounds.net**
Email: **contact@trumpetsounds.net**
Past articles published in Trumpet Sounds are available on the web site.
Trumpet Sounds is also distributed by e-mail to those who request it

Trumpet Sounds is sent free to all who request it.
Gifts towards the cost of production and postage are appreciated.
Cheques to be made out to Trumpet Ministries.
Large Print Editions are available on request.
Address: Philip Wren, Unit 95242, PO Box 6945, London, W1A 6US.