

474 Seventy Years of Change

Sunday February 6th 2022 was the seventieth anniversary of the accession of Her Majesty the Queen to the throne, a cause for much thanksgiving in the nation and commonwealth. This thanksgiving is both to and for this remarkable lady herself, and to and for Almighty God Himself, “the King of kings and Lord of lords” (Revelation 17.17;19.16), “who dost from thy throne behold all the dwellers upon earth ...” (from ‘A Prayer for the Queen’s Majesty’, Book of Common Prayer).

As many have pointed out in the media, those seventy years have seen massive changes in the nature of our country, during which time the Queen has been a focus of unity, comfort and constancy.

At this remarkable anniversary it is appropriate for us to use two of our Weekly Reflections to stand back and survey these past seventy years: first, this time, largely to take in just how much has changed in this period; and second, next time, the Lord being willing, to understand these changes scripturally and spiritually - the reasons for them; their consequences, be these for good or ill; and their significance for Christian discipleship and Gospel witness. Quite a task!

There are far too many changes to list properly in a few hundred words here, so for the remainder of this week’s Reflection, please now go to our website – www.fsmins.org, then to the This Week page, then to Item 1 “Seventy Years of Change”. Please click on that title to download the 5-page pdf, which serves as the rest of this week’s Reflection. (If any problems with this route, please email us on info@fsmins.org for a pdf copy, with “70” in the subject line).

The Introduction to this pdf “Seventy Years of Change, 1952-2022” reads as follows: “Notable people, events, situations and trends are listed within each decade roughly by category and therefore only roughly by actual date order. Deliberately, no editorial comments are made about these changes in this pdf at this stage. It is suggested that you go slowly and prayerfully through this list, decade by decade, seeking to answer two key questions as you go along: WHY? and SO WHAT? – from the Lord’s point of view, and for society, governance, the Church and the Gospel”.

We plan to come on to our Christian reactions to these changes next week. Meanwhile two features stand out which are worth mentioning at

this stage: the pre-eminence of social change over the seventy years;
and the significance of the 1960s decade.

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