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In the name of Allah,
most Gracious, most Merciful

King Charles III's admiration for Islam

Queen Elizabeth II passed away on 8 September. The next in line to the throne, Prince Charles, thus became king, known as King Charles III. The previous two King Charleses lived in the 17th century.

As the new British monarch, he is the head of the Church of England. However, this is a titular post, that is, an official position of leadership but possessing few, if any, actual powers. Over the years, he has shown interest in other religions, including Islam. "In truth, the king is a devout Anglican whose deep engagement with Islam (as well as Judaism and Orthodox Christianity) is connected to his interest in Traditionalism, the esoteric 20th-century school of thought whose early proponents railed against the

modern world, believing that all the great religions share universal truths that could be antidotes to contemporary woes."¹

Before coming to the throne, when he was the Prince of Wales, Charles's interest in Islam led to him becoming a Patron of the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies². "Writer Robert Jobson in his book *Charles at Seventy: Thoughts, Hopes and Dreams*³ noted that the monarch studies the Islamic holy book the Quran and signs letters to Muslim leaders in Arabic."⁴ He once studied Arabic in order to better understand the Quran.

His sympathy and admiration for Islam may pit him against the current British government. "Last week, Liz Truss took over as prime minister of what many consider to be the most Islamophobic government in British history. A government which refuses to engage with the largest representative body of British Muslims and has framed an invidious security regime (Prevent) which targets them; in which a minister was sacked because her 'Muslim woman minister status was making colleagues feel uncomfortable'. A government accused this week of treating Muslims like second-class citizens."⁵¹



Royal quotes about Islam

What follows is a number of quotations from speeches delivered by King Charles about various aspects of Islam.

Muslims in Britain

Unlike many people in the UK, including members of the Conservative government, the King acknowledges the contributions of Muslims to British society.

"I have already mentioned the size of our own Muslim communities who live throughout Britain, both in large towns like Bradford and in tiny communities in places as remote as Stornaway in Western Scotland. These people, ladies and gentlemen, are an asset to Britain. They contribute to all parts of our economy – to industry, the public services, the professions and the private sector. We find them as teachers, as doctors, as engineers and as scientists. They contribute to our economic well-being as a country, and add to the cultural richness of our nation."⁶

Western debt to Muslim civilisation

He acknowledges that Islamic civilisation flourished long before western civilisation.

"If there is much misunderstanding in the West about the nature of Islam, there is also much ignorance about the debt our own culture and civilisation owe to the Islamic world. It is a failure which stems, I think, from the straitjacket of history which we have inherited."⁶

"The medieval Islamic world, from Central Asia to the shores of the

Atlantic, was a world where scholars and men of learning flourished. But because we have tended to see Islam as the enemy of the West, as an alien culture, society and system of belief, we have tended to ignore or erase its great relevance to our own history."⁶

"We need to remember that we in the West are in debt to the scholars of Islam, for it was thanks to them that during the Dark Ages in Europe the treasures of classical learning were kept alive."⁷

"Anyone who doubts the contribution of Islam and Muslims to the European Renaissance should, as an exercise, try to do some simple arithmetic using Roman numerals.

"Thank goodness for Arabic numerals and the concept of zero introduced into European thought by Muslim mathematicians!"⁸

Ignorance or discrimination?

Charles points out that, with increasing connectedness through technology, information about all topics, including Islam, can easily be found online and elsewhere.

"The depressing fact is that, despite the advances in technology and mass communication of the second half of the 20th century, despite mass travel, the intermingling of races, the ever-growing reduction – or so we believe – of the mysteries of our world, misunderstandings between Islam and the West continue. Indeed, they may be growing. As far as the West is concerned, this cannot be because of ignorance."⁶



Shared beliefs

Growing up as the son of the head of the Church of England, Charles clearly knows much about Christianity. His focus, however, is positively on the commonalities between religions, rather than negatively on their differences.

"It is odd, in many ways, that misunderstandings between Islam and the West should persist. For that which binds our two worlds together is so much more powerful than that which divides us. Muslims, Christians – and Jews – are all 'peoples of the Book'. Islam and Christianity share a common monotheistic vision: a belief in one divine God, in the transience of our earthly life, in our accountability for our actions, and in the assurance of life to come. We share many key values in common: respect for knowledge, for justice, compassion towards the poor and underprivileged, the importance of family life, respect for parents. 'Honour thy father and thy mother' is a Quranic precept too. Our history has been closely bound up together."⁶

Extremism

In the West, extremism is often associated exclusively with Islam, even though people claiming to belong to other religions commit similar crimes. Charles warned people to guard against this bias.

"We must not be tempted to believe that extremism is in some way the hallmark and essence of the Muslim. Extremism is no more the monopoly of Islam than it is the monopoly of other religions, including Christianity. The vast

majority of Muslims, though personally pious, are moderate in their politics. Theirs is the 'religion of the middle way'. The Prophet himself always disliked and feared extremism."⁶

Freedom of expression?

Two episodes in the last few decades have related to what some people call freedom of speech or freedom of expression. However, this does not lead to a *carte blanche* freedom to insult knowingly. In both cases, the authors knew well the hurt that they were causing.

The first episode was the publication in 1988 of Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*. "In 2014, author Martin Amis told *Vanity Fair* that he had argued with Charles over his apparent refusal to support Salman Rushdie after a fatwa was issued against him following the publication of *The Satanic Verses*. Amis claimed that Charles told him that he would not offer support 'if someone insults someone else's deepest convictions'."⁷

The second episode is the publication in 2005 of cartoons depicting Prophet Muhammad (saw) by the Danish newspaper *Jyllands-Posten*. Prince Charles took the Muslim side, commenting, "The true mark of a civilised society is the respect it pays to minorities and to strangers. The recent ghastly strife and anger over the Danish cartoons shows the danger that comes of our failure to listen and to respect what is precious and sacred to others."⁴

Conservation

Like his father, Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, who passed away last year, King Charles shares a keen interest in all things to do with conservation and the environment. However, Charles related this to the teachings of Islam.

"From what I know of [Islam's] core teachings and commentaries, the important principle we must keep in mind is that there are limits to the abundance of nature. These are not arbitrary limits, they are the limits imposed by God and, as such, if my understanding of the Quran is correct, Muslims are commanded not to transgress them.

"The inconvenient truth is that we share this planet with the rest of creation for a very good reason – and that is, we cannot exist on our own without the intricately balanced web of life around us. Islam has always taught this and to ignore that lesson is to default on our contract with Creation."⁷

As a practical example of this, he described how his garden in his Gloucestershire home, Highgrove House, is inspired by Islamic traditions and plants mentioned in the Quran. "I planted fig,

pomegranate and olive trees in the garden because of their mention in the Qur'an."¹

In short, he recognises that Islam, as a deen, embraces all aspects of life. "Islam – like Buddhism and Hinduism – refuses to separate man and nature, religion and science, mind and matter, and has preserved a metaphysical and unified view of ourselves and the world around us."⁶

Women's rights

Islam is often claimed to be a religion that discriminates against women, despite many passages in the Quran, and hadiths, that show the equality of women, the elevated status of mothers, etc.

"Remember, if you will, that Islamic countries like Turkey, Egypt and Syria gave women the vote as early as Europe did its women – and much earlier than in Switzerland! In those countries, women have long enjoyed equal pay, and the opportunity to play a full working role in their societies. The rights of Muslim women to property and inheritance, to some protection if divorced, and to the conducting of business, were rights prescribed by the Qur'an 1,400 years ago, even if they were not everywhere translated into practice. In Britain at least, some of these rights were novel, even to my grandmother's generation! Benazir Bhutto [of Pakistan] and Begum Khaleda Zia [of Bangladesh] became prime ministers in their own traditional societies when Britain had for the first time ever in its history elected a female prime minister [Margaret Thatcher]. That, I think, does not necessarily smack of a mediaeval society."⁶



Prince Charles designed the Islamic Carpet Garden for the 2001 Chelsea Flower Show and won a Silver-Gilt medal. The garden was then transported to his Highgrove home.



Islamic finance

King Charles realises the morality of Islamic finance.

"It is surely a good idea to explore how the spirit inherent in the 'moral economy' of Islam could enable a just and ethical approach towards the management of systemic risk in economics, in business and finance. The way risk-sharing, implicit in *musharaka*, works, for example, with lenders sharing the borrower's risk, and the notion of *mudharabah*, the sharing of profit. This is very different from the way that conventional finance transfers the risk quickly and frequently onto someone else with profit going just one way.

"I suspect that if the strict injunction of the Quran against *riba* were to be applied to the economic system that prevails at the moment, then the debt we have effectively incurred for future generations by the depletion of the Earth's natural capital would surely be found to be usurious and profoundly unacceptable. This is why financial and business organisations that keep to the principles embedded within Islam could be helpful in forging a more ethical approach that leads to equitable outcomes."⁷

Support for Muslims

We, as ordinary citizens, can sign petitions and letters of support for various Muslim causes. In his position, Prince Charles clearly could not, but he could make his opinions known.

"According to Jobson, Charles believed that 'marching in carrying a banner for western-style democracy was both foolhardy and futile'. Charles has also told ministers that he no longer wishes to have his connections with Gulf

leaders used for British arms companies to sell weapons. Then there's his sympathy towards the Palestinians, which may be why it was his son Prince William, and not Charles himself, who carried out the first royal visit to Israel in June 2018. It was only in 2020 that Charles made his first visit to Israel. He took care to visit the Occupied Palestinian Territories, where he declared it his 'dearest wish that the future will bring freedom, justice and equality to all Palestinians.'"¹

Since her death, it has been pointed out that Queen Elizabeth never visited Israel. "Indeed, no member of the UK's royal family visited the country in an official capacity until 2018, when Prince William, the queen's grandson, arrived for the 70th anniversary of Israel's independence, ending what appeared to many as an unofficial boycott.

"Visiting Jordan in 1984, one of several visits she made to the Middle East, the queen was reported to have said 'How frightening' as Israeli fighter jets shot past in the sky as she viewed the West Bank in the distance. Queen Nour, King Hussein of Jordan's wife, was said to have replied, 'It's terrible.' Later, after viewing a map showing the locations of illegal settlements in the occupied West Bank, Queen Elizabeth was quoted as saying, 'What a depressing map.'"⁹



1
www.middleeasteye.net/opinion/king-charles-most-pro-islam-monarch-british-history

2
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oxford_Centre_for_Islamic_Studies

3 Jobson, R. (2018). *Charles at Seventy: Thoughts, Hopes and Dreams*. John Blake Publishing

4
www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/9/11/king-charles-what-are-his-views-on-islam

5
www.middleeasteye.net/news/british-muslims-citizenship-reduced-second-class-status-report

6
www.princeofwales.gov.uk/speech/speech-hrh-prince-wales-titled-islam-and-west-oxford-centre-islamic-studies-sheldonian

7
www.middleeasteye.net/news/king-charles-iii-five-things-islam-muslims

8
www.princeofwales.gov.uk/speech/speech-hrh-prince-wales-during-his-visit-islamic-foundation-markfield-institute-higher

9
www.middleeasteye.net/news/queen-elizabeth-israel-never-visited-how

Conclusion

We wish King Charles III a long and successful reign, and we hope that he can convince the people of the UK and the Commonwealth of his enlightened and educated stance towards Islam and Muslims.

In addition to the King's speeches quoted above and referenced below, we encourage readers to access the following transcripts of his speeches, from his official website, all of which have an Islamic bent to them:

1996. A speech by HRH The Prince of Wales titled 'A Sense of the Sacred: Building Bridges Between Islam and the West', The Wilton Park Seminar, Wilton Park, West Sussex. www.princeofwales.gov.uk/speech/speech-hrh-prince-wales-titled-sense-sacred-building-bridges-between-islam-and-west-wilton

2003. A speech by HRH The Prince of Wales during his visit to The Islamic Foundation, the Markfield Institute of Higher Education, Markfield, Leicestershire. www.princeofwales.gov.uk/speech/speech-hrh-prince-wales-during-his-visit-islamic-foundation-markfield-institute-higher

2006. A speech by HRH The Prince of Wales titled 'Unity in Faith' at Al-Azhar University, Cairo, Egypt. www.princeofwales.gov.uk/speech/speech-hrh-prince-wales-titled-unity-faith-al-azhar-university-cairo-egypt

2010. A speech by HRH The Prince of Wales titled 'Islam and the Environment', Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford. www.princeofwales.gov.uk/speech/speech-hrh-prince-wales-titled-islam-and-environment-sheldonian-theatre-oxford

2013. A speech by The Prince of Wales to the World Islamic Economic Forum, London. www.princeofwales.gov.uk/speech/speech-prince-wales-world-islamic-economic-forum-london

2022. A message from HRH The Prince of Wales at the start of Ramadan 2022. www.princeofwales.gov.uk/our-view/message-hrh-prince-wales-start-ramadan-2022



The changing religious landscape of the USA

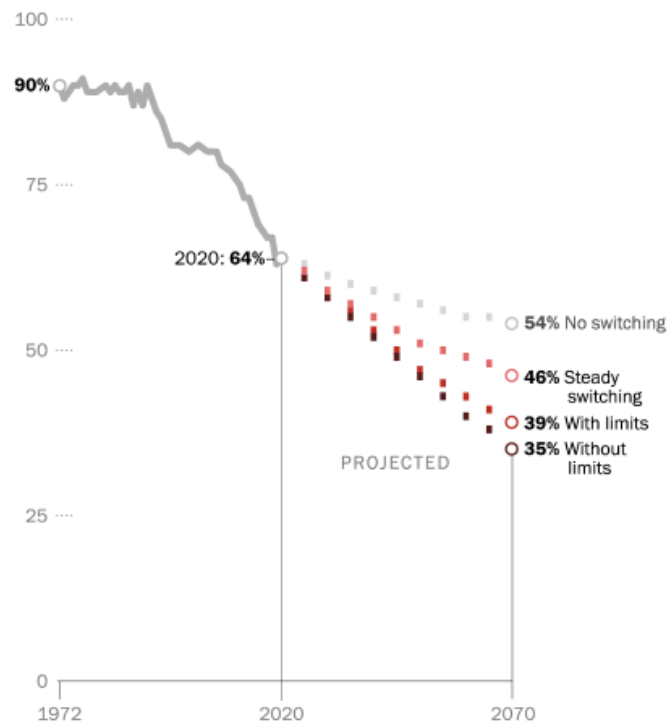
The Pew Research Center¹ has been quoted several times in issues of *Rocket Science*, as they conduct reliable research into various aspects of life in the USA and elsewhere, including religion. Their latest published report² relates to the religious make-up of the USA, with projections to 2070.

“Since the 1990s, large numbers of Americans have left Christianity to join the growing ranks of U.S. adults who describe their religious identity as atheist, agnostic or ‘nothing in particular’.”

Nobody can predict the future with 100% accuracy, so it is important to note that Pew has modelled four hypothetical scenarios, as explained in the graphs below.

U.S. Christians projected to fall below 50% of population if recent trends continue

% of Americans who are Christian

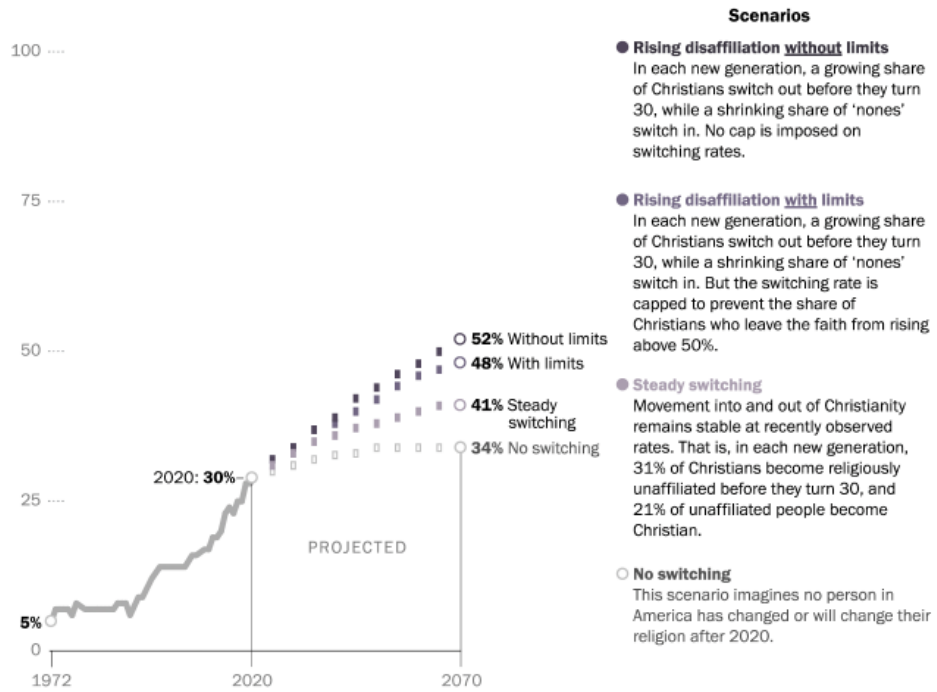


Scenarios

- **No switching**
This scenario imagines no person in America has changed or will change their religion after 2020.
- **Steady switching**
Movement into and out of Christianity remains stable at recently observed rates. That is, in each new generation, 31% of Christians become religiously unaffiliated before they turn 30, and 21% of unaffiliated people become Christian.
- **Rising disaffiliation with limits**
In each new generation, a growing share of Christians switch out before they turn 30, while a shrinking share of ‘nones’ switch in. But the switching rate is capped to prevent the share of Christians who leave the faith from rising above 50%.
- **Rising disaffiliation without limits**
In each new generation, a growing share of Christians switch out before they turn 30, while a shrinking share of ‘nones’ switch in. No cap is imposed on switching rates.

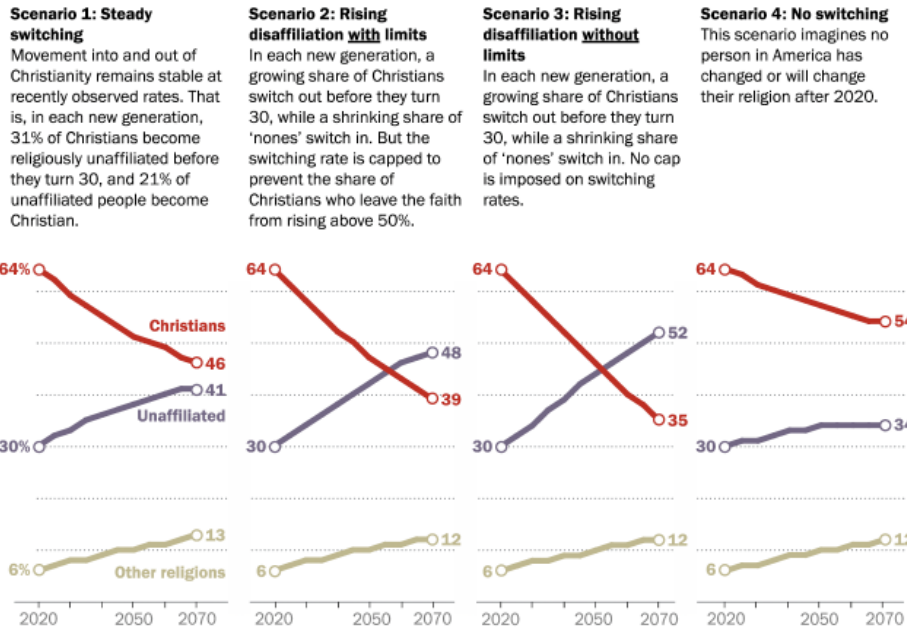
U.S. 'nones' will approach majority by 2070 if recent switching trends continue

% of Americans who are religiously unaffiliated



In all four main scenarios, religiously unaffiliated Americans are projected to approach or exceed Christians in number by 2070

% of Americans of all ages in each group (projected)



In short, the religious landscape of the USA is projected to change substantially in the next half century.

Global roundup

Uyghurs: China may have committed crimes against humanity in Xinjiang - UN

www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-62744522

Uyghurs UN report: International community must take action or be 'willfully complicit'

www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-62758357

Read the UN report:

www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/countries/2022-08-31/22-08-31-final-assesment.pdf

Democratic lawmakers call on Biden to take action over Israeli raids

mondoweiss.net/2022/08/democratic-lawmakers-call-on-biden-to-take-action-over-israeli-raids/?emci=5cb4f51f-c527-ed11-bd6e-281878b914e7&emdi=2ab95671-6f28-ed11-ae83-281878b83d8a&ceid=13249782

Bachelet [UN High Commissioner for Human Rights] deplores Israel's failure to grant visas for UN Human Rights staff in the occupied Palestinian territory

www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2022/08/bachelet-deplores-israels-failure-grant-visas-un-human-rights-staff-occupied

Chile's Palestinians praise Boric's cancellation of Israeli ambassador's credential ceremony, and look forward to more

www.middleeastmonitor.com/20220917-chiles-palestinians-praise-borics-cancellation-of-israeli-ambassadors-credential-ceremony-and-look-forward-to-more/?sourceid=1001761&emci=9b38e790-ca39-ed11-a27c-281878b83d8a&emdi=539f5fb2-d539-ed11-a27c-281878b83d8a&ceid=99386

Seeing the invisible: Reflections on Visiting Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Hebron, and Jaffa

www.counterpunch.org/2022/08/12/seeing-the-invisible-reflections-on-visiting-jerusalem-bethlehem-hebron-and-jaffa/?emci=5cb4f51f-c527-ed11-bd6e-281878b914e7&emdi=2ab95671-6f28-ed11-ae83-281878b83d8a&ceid=13249782

Booking.com to put warnings on listings in illegal Israeli settlements

www.middleeasteye.net/news/bookingcom-israel-settlements-warnings-listings

Ben & Jerry's makes fresh push to stop Israel ice cream deal

www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-09-06/ben-jerry-s-makes-fresh-push-to-stop-israel-ice-cream-deal?leadSource=verify%20wall

Google employee who played key role in protest of contract with Israel quits

www.nytimes.com/2022/08/30/technology/google-employee-israel.html

Marvel's Israeli Mossad agent superhero

palestine.salsalabs.org/saynotomarvel/index.html?sourceid=1001761&emci=9b38e790-ca39-ed11-a27c-281878b83d8a&emdi=539f5fb2-d539-ed11-a27c-281878b83d8a&ceid=99386

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Why attend Rocket Park jumuah?

Prayers are held at the **Senior Citizens' Association building, Rocket Park, New North Road, Mount Albert.**

- ✓ Central location
- ✓ Plenty of free parking
- ✓ Facilities for ladies
- ✓ Heating and air-conditioning
- ✓ Bayan (religious talk) before jumuah prayers
- ✓ All bayans and khutbahs in English

NB We are only open for Friday prayers – not for the five daily prayers.

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Missed an issue of *Rocket Science*? All our monthly issues are available online at the Mount Albert Islamic Trust website: www.mtalbertislamiccentre.org

SwT, saw, as, ra

SwT: subhanahu wa ta'ala "Glory to Him, the Exalted" (when mentioning Allah)

saw: salallahu alaihi wassalam "May the blessings and peace of Allah be upon him" (when mentioning Muhammad)

as: alaihis salam "Peace be on him" (when mentioning other prophets)

ra: radi allahu anhu/ha/hum "May Allah be pleased with him/her/them" (when mentioning members of Muhammad's family, companions, etc)