**Great Britain Falls Silent**

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After more than 70 years on the throne, Queen Elizabeth II, Britain’s longest-reigning monarch, was buried on September 19. The entire nation came together to salute their beloved Queen as Great Britain falls silent to say “Last Farewell” to Queen Elizabeth II. Her death marked the end of the second Elizabethan era and the beginning of a period of public mourning for the UK.

At 6.30 am, doors were closed to the public for the Queen’s lying-in-state in Westminster Hall and Westminster Abbey was opened for the congregation to take their seats for the state funeral service. Meanwhile, the Bearer party, drawn from Queen’s Company, 1st Battalion, Grenadier Guards, lifted the coffin from the catafalque. It carried it in procession from Westminster Hall to the Royal Navy’s state gun carriage, which was positioned outside the building’s north door. Gun carriage, drawn by 142 Royal Navy service personnel. The King, members of the Royal family, his household and the household of the Prince of Wales followed the coffin. The bearer party lifted the coffin from the state gun carriage and carried it inside the church for a state funeral. Two thousand guests attended the service, followed by a national two-minute silence.

The Very Rev David Hoyle, dean of Westminster Abbey, opened the service with the powerful words: “In grief and also in profound thanksgiving we come to this House of God, to a place of prayer, to a church where remembrance and hope are sacred duties.”

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“Here, where Queen Elizabeth was married and crowned, we gather from across the nation, from the Commonwealth, and the nations of the world, to mourn our loss, to remember her long life of selfless service, and in sure confidence to commit her to the mercy of God our maker and redeemer.” In my view, readings from the Bible truly captured the hallmarks of a traditional Anglican funeral, including the hymn The Lord Is My Shepherd – said to be a favourite of the Queen’s – from Psalm 23.

1) I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. John 11: 25-26

2) I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. Job 19: 25-27 British Prime Minister, Liz Truss read Jesus’s words from John, “Let not your heart be troubled: you believe in God, believe also in me. In my father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.”

Nevertheless, I heard the wonderful English and richness of human emotions at their best at the funeral. I heard angelic voices of the choir of the abbey plus the Chapel’s Royal voices that are singing to the glory of God. To my mind, every moment of the funeral encapsulated Queen’s strong Christian faith, which has been evident throughout her life in her words and actions.

Queen’s funeral was a day of emotion and sadness, but also a celebration of the monarch’s life. Thousands of people lined the streets in London and Windsor to pay their respects as she made her final journey. Millions more watched at home in the UK and around the world as the funeral was televised as the most watched broadcast in history. Across the country, big screens were put up, including in London’s Hyde Park, Edinburgh’s Holyrood, Sheffield’s Cathedral Square, Birmingham’s Centenary Square, and Coleraine Town Hall in Northern Ireland. Cinemas across the UK also opened their screens to show the funeral – bringing together nation together to commemorate.

Queen Elizabeth II’s state funeral was an event beyond compare. More than 500 dignitaries from over 200 nations attended the funeral, 10000 uniformed police officers protected them while snipers were stationed on the rooftop and surveillance drones were also monitoring every single moment. The state funeral was a major logistical operation and has marked the largest gathering of foreign dignitaries on UK soil since the death of former Prime Minister Winston Churchill, who was also afforded a state burial in 1965.

On Sunday, US president Joe Biden; New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern; Prime Minister of Australia Anthony Norman; French President Emmanuel Macron and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau visited Westminster Hall to pay their respects to the late Queen; attending the lying-in-state.

President Biden, who has said the Queen reminded him of his mother, made the sign of the cross and put his hand to his heart as he stood quietly near the casket with his wife and US Ambassador Jane Hartley. Spain’s King Felipe VI also visited Westminster Hall on Sunday to pay his final respects. He spent just over a minute standing silently with his head bowed and made the cross sign. It was also a historic moment to see Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Prime Minister of Pakistan, in the West Minster Abbey for the Queen’s funeral. For being part of a Christian crusade of the World leaders in a historic Church, every moment of the funeral will remind him for many years to come what a nation looks like when personal differences are put behind. It will remind him of the world’s biggest Christian congregation of the century that reflected every colour of faith.

After the service, Her Majesty’s coffin travelled from Westminster Abbey to Wellington Arch in London. The procession, which proceeded in seven groups and was supported by a service band, travelled along Broad Sanctuary, Parliament Square, Whitehall, Horse Guards Parade, Horse Guards Road, The Mall, Constitution Hill, and ended at London’s Wellington Arch. In the end, Her Majesty’s coffin was carried from Wellington Arch by the State Hearse to Windsor.

The final service for members of the royal family before the Queen’s burial was held at St George’s Chapel at Windsor Castle. St. George’s Chapel has a long history for the royal family, not just as a burial site, but as a location for weddings, christenings, and funerals. After the service, the Queen was buried in the King George VI Memorial Chapel, an annexe to the St George’s Chapel. It was commissioned by the Queen in 1962, in line with her late father’s wishes not wanting to be buried long-term in the Royal Vault. There, she joined her father, George VI, the Queen Mother and her sister, Princess Margaret. Prince Philip is in the Royal Vault but will be moved to lie beside his wife in the chapel.

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