



Firefly

Researchers studying the light production of fireflies have discovered that a complex cascade of chemical reactions is responsible, triggered by their nervous system. The abdomens of fireflies contain special cells called *photocytes*, harbouring two chemicals called *luciferin*

and *luciferase*. When oxygen enters the cells these two react to emit a beautiful glow, without producing any heat that would harm the insect.

Normally oxygen entering the cells is bound to structures called *mitochondria* and is not available. It takes another gas,

nitric oxide (NO), produced by enzymes close to the photocytes, to activate the oxygen and switch on the light.

The only explanation scientists can bring forward for the appearance of such astonishing chemical complexity is 'aeons of time'; given long enough, they claim, anything is possible. Intelligent design by the Creator stands as a far more satisfying explanation.

Long before the imaginary *Avatar*, God caused the face of His servant Moses to shine (Ex. 34:29-35) as a sign that Moses had been in the Divine presence, and subsequently revealed His glory in the face of Jesus Christ (Mt. 17:2; 2 Cor. 4:6). Bioluminescence is just one product of the God of all wisdom, the great Designer Whose handiwork is everywhere evident in nature and before Whom we stand in awe.

Watchman

The Greek crisis and the Roman Empire

Michael Jenner

The debt crisis in Greece is seen by some as a threat to the survival of the euro as a common currency. However, the leaders of Europe see the solution to this financial difficulty in closer political integration, a development that Bible prophecy leads us to expect.

EVEN BEFORE European bureaucrats have determined what the newly ratified Lisbon Treaty will mean in practice for the daily running of European institutions, the debt crisis in Greece has led leaders to call for more treaty changes to facilitate further moves towards European political union. This may perhaps trigger the next leap forward towards the creation of the

European beast power that will "stand up against" our Lord upon his return.

The hopes of the Lisbon agenda, which was supposed to make Europe "the most dynamic and competitive knowledge-based economy in the world . . . by 2010", remain unfulfilled,

and so European leaders met at a summit on 25 March to discuss how they would fulfil those goals in the next ten-year economic plan. However, the summit was hijacked by the more immediate problem of the Greek debt crisis and its potential to bring down the euro. Together, France's Nicolas Sarkozy and Germany's Angela Merkel agreed the foundations of a financial rescue package for

Greece, which was then submitted to the fourteen other eurozone¹ countries for approval.

Intergration, not catastrophe

There has been fierce debate in recent weeks over what the Greek crisis will mean for the euro, with some arguing that it could spell the death knell for both the currency and ongoing European integration. But many EU leaders, including those of France and Germany, though expressing concerns over having potentially to bail out Greece, have stated that they will not let the European project disintegrate. Furthermore, it is becoming clear that the only way to stop such a catastrophe occurring, now with Greece, or in the near future with the debt troubles of Spain and Portugal, will be through further European integration.

The Franco-German package seeks to commit European Union members to the formation of a European economic government that would have considerable powers to oversee and direct economic policy across European states.² France submitted that the European Council (the central EU political institution) should become the 'economic government', and Germany has asked Mr Van Rompuy, the first permanent president of the European Council, to set up a task force "exploring all options to reinforce the legal framework", which would include further changes to EU treaties.³ Such changes to the treaties may be required because fiscal 'bail-outs' of the type that may be needed to stabilise Greece are not currently permitted. Mr Van Rompuy himself seems to be supportive of the Franco-German plan; he frequently uses the phrase 'European Economic Government', and has spoken of "Macroeconomic coordination to make sure that national policies do not clash with EU goals".⁴

A significant rescue package

If a Greek rescue package were enacted it would be very significant, in that taxes paid by people in one European country could be used to support people in another, which is the hallmark of a truly federal union. As the *Economist* magazine put it: "A rescue for Greece would set a precedent: fiscal

transfers to preserve monetary union. In short, it is said, a crisis is once again triggering a leap forward in European integration".⁵

Many impartial commentators have also argued that the Greek crisis shows that the

EU has no choice but to plough ahead with further union. Gerard Lyon, the Chief

Economist at Standard Chartered

Bank, is well known for arguing that "European Monetary

Union (EMU) will need to become a political union to survive".

Paul Krugman, a Nobel Economics Laureate, argues that

it would be bad economics to do anything other

than move towards fiscal union: "... the only way out

is forward: to make the euro work, Europe needs to move

much further toward political union, so that European nations

start to function more like American states".⁶ Put simply, Mr Krugman is arguing

that fiscal union is necessary and desirable for the eurozone in the same way as it is for the

US, where Federal taxes charged in all states are distributed among other states according to need.

In truth, all this is not really such radical thinking, since political union was always the plan

and the very reason for the creation of the euro. Tommaso Padoa-Schioppa, a former member

of the board of the European Central Bank, recently said that "The founding fathers wanted the euro

primarily as a step towards political union".⁷ Indeed, the euro architects always knew that

Europe would at some point encounter a financial crisis, but this was seen as desirable because it

would act as a catalyst towards further economic and political union. Gerhard Schröder, the German

chancellor at the time that euro notes first emerged from Europe's cash machines, believed



1. The eurozone covers the area of the sixteen EU countries who have adopted the euro currency.

2. "Paris and Berlin agree plan for Greece", *Financial Times*, 26 Mar. 2010.

3. "Partners paper over cracks in Athens deal", *ibid.*

4. *Economist*, 13 Mar. 2010, p. 58, Charlemagne.

5. *Economist*, 20 Feb. 2010, p. 51, Charlemagne.

6. "The Making of a Euromess", Paul Krugman, *New York Times*, 14 Feb. 2010.

7. "Europe cannot leave Athens on its own", *Financial Times*, 18 Feb. 2010.

that monetary union required “decisive advances towards political union”, and Romano Prodi, as president of the European Commission, looked forward to an eventual crisis in the eurozone as the event that would trigger such advances.⁸

These advances are already taking place. Germany’s current finance minister, Wolfgang Schäuble, noted that already the Greek crisis has given rise to a sea change in the way the EU is operating, when he wrote, “For the first time, we in the eurozone are engaged in full surveillance over the fiscal and economic policy of one of the member countries of the European monetary union”.⁹

Mr Schäuble went on to argue that the European institutions are incomplete, and that EU states have to be prepared to integrate further and play an active part in each other’s policy-making. He also suggested the creation of a new European Monetary Fund, and he argues for the EU statistical office, Eurostat, to have the right to inspect all public accounts of EU member states.

As the prophets expected

With all these astonishing events and discussions taking place in the political heavens, we as “a watchman unto the house of Israel” must remind ourselves from Scripture why it is that a Europe moving economically and politically towards a federal union is a clear fulfilment of Bible prophecy.

There can be no dispute that the fourth empire referred to in Nebuchadnezzar’s vision in Daniel 2 (the legs of iron, v. 40) was the Roman Empire. In Daniel 7 these four empires are described again, this time as beasts. Verse 7 describes the fourth beast as having iron teeth and ten horns, which must again refer to Rome. The prophecy tells us that this fourth beast will be in existence and active at the time of Christ’s return (vv. 19-21) but that judgement will surely come upon it “until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High” (v. 22). Daniel 8:25 also makes the same point of the fourth beast, saying that it challenges the Lord Jesus Christ: “he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand”.

Lastly, Revelation 17 speaks of the same time period and the same Roman beast; a “scarlet coloured beast” (v. 3) with ten horns (v. 12) will seek to make war against the “Lord of Lords, and King of kings” (v. 14), who will overcome them. Consequently, we should be looking for a power with Roman-like qualities to be extant at the time

of our Lord’s return. As we frequently observe, the modern-day European Union stands alone in fulfilling these criteria.

Revelation 17 gives us further detail with which to identify the Roman beast with the EU. Christadelphians have long drawn attention to the five forms of Roman government that were identified by historians writing at the time of the Apostle John. Brethren have argued that these forms of Roman government are represented by the heads of the Roman beast mentioned in Revelation 17:10,11.¹⁰ It has been pointed out that, when John recorded the book of Revelation, five previous forms of Roman government had been extant (“five are fallen”), with the sixth ‘Imperial’ form in power (“. . . and one is”) at the time of John’s writing. This was followed by the seventh ‘Gothic’ form of government (“the other is not yet come”) that took away the Imperial head.¹¹ But, as Revelation 17:11 points out, the Roman beast endures with an eighth head of government: “And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven”. The final formation of the eighth and last phase of the Roman beast is what we are watching for today in Europe.

The fact that European leaders continue to discuss taking actions that are unprecedented in world history, in that they seek to work towards surrendering sovereignty *voluntarily* to a central European bureaucracy, is nothing less than we should expect. Revelation 17 tells us that the ten horns of the beast are kings that have given their power unto the beast: “And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings . . . These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast” (vv. 12,13); “For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil His will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast . . .” (v. 17).

One mind

In recent years we have clearly witnessed these European kings developing the “one mind” to

-
8. “Greece threatens more than the euro”, *Financial Times*, 23 Feb. 2010.
 9. “Why Europe’s monetary union faces its biggest crisis”, Wolfgang Schäuble, *Financial Times*, 11 Mar. 2010.
 10. *Eureka*, Logos Publications (1985 edition), vol. 4, p. 61. Brother Thomas remarks that the historians Tacitus and Livy enumerated the first five forms of Roman government.
 11. Revelation 17:10 notes that the seventh Gothic head would continue only “a short space”; the Gothic form of government lasted only sixty years, from A.D. 476 to A.D. 554.

give their power to the Roman beast. The momentous events of January 2002, when European states gave up their currencies in favour of the euro, re-established a European currency not seen since the days of Rome. And the European Economic Government now being proposed may well include within it the next big step towards a federal Europe: the establishment of a pan-

European fiscal system the like of which has never been seen in Europe since the taxes of the Roman Empire. We must look upon these historic debates in Europe with excitement as they signal to us the nearness of our Lord and Master's return; and we are exhorted to be ready and waiting, for we know that we could be called to the judgement seat at any moment.