

includes changes to the country's central bank, the BBC reporter Jeremy Scott-Joynt writes:

"Aid agencies, pressure groups, governments and economists agree that the deal, as it stands, is good news. It offers the chance of solid funding for the massive development needs of all Sudanese. The government's oil ministry hopes it will allow production to grow from the current 250,000 barrels a day—bringing in about \$2bn a year—to 500,000 barrels by 2005".⁷

Whether an overall peace emerges within Sudan remains to be seen. There are many factors which could derail the moves towards peace. For example, in the western Darfur region Arab militias have been carrying out what has been described as ethnic cleansing, with whole villages inhabited by dark-skinned Africans being wiped out. As the BBC states: "Some aid workers fear that the conflict in Darfur is being ignored as international attention is focused on the peace talks between the government and the rebels based in southern Sudan".⁸ Also there is dispute over the three regions of Abyei, Nuba Mountains and Blue Nile.

Although America is keen to establish a foothold in Sudan because of its concerns over ter-

rorism and the presence of oil, Ezekiel 38 shows that, when Gog invades, Sudan will be allied to Russia. It will be interesting to see how things develop in this regard. The increasing importance of oil in the country has served to wake up the international community to the situation in Sudan. Perhaps Russia too will now show more interest in the country.

Conclusion

When Christ returns, Sudan will be one of the countries from which Jews will be gathered back to the land: "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush [Sudan], and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea" (Isa. 11:11). Once the Kingdom is established, Sudan will soon repent: "Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia [Sudan] shall soon stretch out her hands unto God" (Ps. 68:31).

7. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/3383921.stm>

8. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/3403115.stm>



Correspondence

Comments on articles appearing in the magazine are always welcome, and should be addressed to the editor in whose section the article appears.

France and Germany

With regard to the article entitled "Franco-German cooperation" ([Nov. 2003, p. 415](#)), I certainly agree with the comment, "In the east will be the Russian power, symbolised by the dragon in Revelation 16. In the west will be the European power represented by the beast". But who or what is the beast? I cannot agree that France and Germany are part of the beast.

In order to understand the grand structure of the Apocalypse it is essential we grasp the fact that the last half of the Revelation introduces wild beasts to portray how God views Rome in all its ecclesiastical phases down through the centuries of time.

In *The Testimony*, November 1981, page 351, Brother Richard Mellowes wrote: "... this fourth beast [of Daniel 7] ... as all agree, is Rome ...

[Its] different stages are to be seen in the beasts of Revelation. They are all the Roman beast, but at various phases of its development and history".

The context of Revelation 17:13,14 is important: "These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them". Brother Bernard's reference to this is: "We are looking for the development of a great beast which will oppose the Lamb of God when he returns. The developing relationship between France and Germany at the present time shows that this beast is growing fast".

Again may I emphasise the beast is not limited to France and Germany. Verses 11-14 are a crisis of judgement on the beast. The ten kingdoms of Europe support the beast [Rome] in the war with Christ and the saints. "Mind"

means 'resolve', 'purpose', 'judgement'. They are strengthened in their resolve as the *papal* power (the whore) increases.

Verse 18 confirms the identity of *Rome* as "that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth". Its identity is confirmed again in the well-known verse 5: "Babylon the great, the mother of harlots". The identity is enforced again throughout Revelation 18 as "Babylon the great", *Rome*; see verse 7: "I sit a queen". And again in verse 24: "And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth".

Yes, we should find events in the world breathtaking. If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?

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I would agree that the beast is not limited to France and Germany. However, the ten horns, which form part of the beast, represent the countries of Europe which come under the sway of Rome. These horns include France and Germany. The beast is dominated by Roman Catholicism, "Babylon the Great", but its geographical scope extends across Europe.—N.B.



Prophecy, History and Archaeology

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The Sinai Peninsula

7. Mammals

David Green

HAVING CONSIDERED in the previous two articles some of the characteristic birds of Sinai, we now consider some of the mammals that frequent this area.

The rock hyrax

Hyraxes, also called rock badgers, are small, thickset, greyish-brown, rabbit-like mammals, with the largest being no more than eighteen inches long. These timid and inoffensive creatures live in colonies of up to sixty individuals and usually make their home in holes and crevices in the rocks. They are active mainly by day, when they feed on grass mostly, but also on herbs and shrubs. The Syrian rock hyrax has an extensive range, from Syria to Sinai and southern Arabia.

The AV and some other versions translate the Hebrew word *shaphan*, which means 'the hider', as 'coney',¹ but it is clear that the rock hyrax is intended: "the conies are but a feeble folk, yet make they their houses in the rocks" (Prov. 30:26); "The high hills are a refuge for the wild goats; and the rocks for the conies" (Ps. 104:18). Having many enemies, they exhibit great wariness, and when alerted by their sentry's danger cry

they quickly scamper for the protection of their holes and rock crevices. Their feet have flattened nails resembling hooves and are designed for sure-footed movement as they scamper about the rocks and cliffs, where they are able to run and jump with great skill. The second digit on the hind feet has a claw that is used for grooming.

Under the Law of Moses the rock hyrax was counted as unclean because it did not divide the hoof, although it was said to chew the cud (Lev. 11:5; Deut. 14:7). In fact it is not a true ruminant, having no second stomach. However, it does continually work its teeth, giving an appearance of chewing the cud or re-chewing its food.

The wild ass

The frequent mention of wild asses in the Old Testament shows that they were well known in the vicinity of the Holy Land in Bible times. Wild asses live in desert or semi-desert areas, but there is no clear indication as to whether or

1. 'Coney' or 'cony' is an old English word for rabbit. Although rabbit-like in appearance, the hyrax is not considered to be related to rabbits.