



A Christian Perspective on the European Union and the Referendum



Produced by Intercessors for Britain

Why we are getting involved and why this booklet?

The EU and coming referendum is very important to the nation and its spiritual well-being, which is the key charitable purpose of Intercessors for Britain. Hence we will be taking a line on the referendum, which will be proportionate and appropriate alongside the rest of the work we do. This referendum is a once in a generation event, as I know all too well, having lived under the authority of the EU, yet never had a vote in my lifetime. This booklet is not designed to address all of the endless political and economic arguments with regard to the EU; although it will contain some, it is intended to be a Christian perspective. While it addresses political issues, it is not intended to give a political opinion, but to look at the current situation and the choice before us, and to seek to understand the issues from a Christian perspective.

Citizenship

For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. (Philippians 3:20)

Paul writing to the church at Philippi, having warned them to beware of the *enemies of the cross of Christ* and those *who set their minds on earthly things*, reminds them of this glorious truth: we are citizens of heaven. In Ephesians 2 Paul reminds them that they are *fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household* because God has, in Christ, torn down the dividing wall, making one new man in Christ Jesus.

Before all things, we are of the Kingdom of God, citizens of heaven, part of God's household. Jesus is our Sovereign and our Lord and that is where our loyalties belong. That was true for Jewish believers and Gentile believers in Ephesus, Philippi, Rome, Ethiopia and Jerusalem. Today it is true that we are fellow citizens with many believers from across the EU. We are united and in union with them, through Christ. For this reason some Christians argue that the EU is a good thing - it helps us to be united with our Christian brothers within Europe.

In 1993, under the Maastricht Treaty, we all became citizens of the European Union - but what does that actually mean? Before the Maastricht treaty, we all belonged to the continent of Europe. We could say we were from Europe, as we were all from that land mass. What Maastricht didn't do was to make us citizens of Europe, it made us citizens of the European Union, and that is an important difference. The EU is a political organisation. We didn't join with the peoples of the continent of Europe; we joined a political organisation of only part of Europe. Our citizenship of the EU belongs to the political system of that organisation. We are not one with the people of Europe, we are in union

as peoples of Europe under the European Union organisation. Please see the importance: as citizens of heaven, we are one with our fellow believers under the Lordship and authority of Christ. As citizens of the European Union, yes we are one with other nations of Europe, but we are one under the authority of the organisation of the European Union.

Being united as a people could be a good thing, but what makes it a good thing or not is the reason or authority of that Union. Churches are a great example of this. A church united under Christ and godly, Bible believing leadership is a very good thing. A church united behind the will of man and an ungodly, self serving leadership is a very bad thing. So the question has to be asked: is the EU a force for good bringing people together for the good of the whole of society, or is it something else? We will consider that shortly.

What about nationhood?

As we are citizens of heaven, does our nationality matter at all? It could be argued, what difference does it make? Does the Bible have anything to say about nationhood and national boundaries?

I believe it does. There are, without doubt, dangers in nationalism and national pride. It can be used to oppress "the other" or "the outsider". It can be used to drive people into conflict against other nations and it can have a wrong place in our heart where we put our nation before our God. Having said that, the Bible repeatedly makes much of nations. The word nation or nations is used nearly 600 times (in the NASB). God seems to divide people into groups of peoples, of nations, with identities and languages and cultures. God chose a man, Abraham, to make an *exceedingly great nation* which He sees as a group. Not just Israel but the other nations round about them - sometimes referred to altogether as *the nations*, other times by their name.

In the law we read about countrymen and foreigners, God made a distinction between the two. They are clearly instructed not to oppress the foreigner among them, but they were seen as not part of the nation unless they joined Israel as a nation and shared in the culture and practices and became one with them.

In Deuteronomy 32:8 we read *When the Most High gave the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of man, He set the boundaries of the peoples according to the number of the sons of Israel.* God has established the nations and their boundaries. In Isaiah 10:12&13 God announces His coming judgment against the king of

Assyria. Why? *Because he removed the boundaries of the peoples and plundered their treasures.* It all goes back to the tower of Babel. God divided the people and He scattered them into nations with different languages. I guess a good question to ask is: did that all change when Jesus came? How do the New Testament writers see it?

Jesus saw there would be nations in the future - that there would be wars between nations and kingdoms, and that the gospel should go to all nations. However, other writers speak much more explicitly. Paul during his sermon on Mars Hill says this:

...nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all people life and breath and all things; and He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation, that they would seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; (Acts 17:25-27)

Paul still sees that God has a purpose in boundaries and nations - there is still a place for them. He writes to the church at Thessalonica about the suffering they endured at the hands of their *own countrymen*, and often talked about his own countrymen. It seems there are still nations in the mind of Paul, even among the believing church. He encourages Timothy to pray for kings and those in authority - in other words, the nation in which Timothy finds himself.

If God has a purpose in nations being separate and having boundaries, then it seems we should be very careful about removing or breaking down those boundaries. We need to consider what the EU is, what it has been and is seeking to do, as it certainly isn't the first time in history the deliberate destruction of national boundaries and cultural identities has been employed.

The destruction of national and cultural boundaries and identities in history

What makes people a nation? The belief that we share a common history, culture and identity within a geographical area. Throughout history, empires have sought to destroy these elements in an effort to bring peoples together that they have conquered. The empires gain control, generally in two ways: a military conquest or by making nations vassal states. The first is obvious when it occurs - For example Germany marching into Poland, the USSR entering Finland and the Babylonian invasion of Judah. The second way can often be much more subtle, even to the point where the people of the nation are not even aware they are

under the control of an empire. This is often achieved by the conquering empire by making treaties or becoming a protectorate of a vassal nation. Such incidents would include the "Anschluss" of Austria by Germany, the USSR with some of the Baltic nations, the British Empire many times, and Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria over King Ahaz (2 Kings 16:7).

Once the empire has control over a nation, the strategy always seems to be the same: to break down the borders. A particularly powerful way of doing this is to move people around the empire, either by force or enticement. Examples of this from history can be seen in the USSR, sometimes for employment by the state, sometimes by conscription. The effects of this mixing of peoples still lasts today, with many Russians in former Soviet states, like Estonia and the Crimean area. It creates unrest and revolt in those lands because their loyalties lay with Russia. We saw the same movement of people in the exile of the Jews, when they were taken out of their land and those from the Babylonian Empire were brought in, which saw the birth of the Samaritan people - a people with mixed heritage and a mixture of religions. The Roman Empire was particularly successful because of its movement of people, its ability to break down national and cultural identities, while allowing other religions in private, enforcing one public religion on the whole empire.

Once the national boundaries were broken down, decrees would go out to the rest of the empire (Daniel 3:1-5 & Luke 2:1), taxes would be taken without representation (2 Kings 23:35, Matthew 17:24-26), kings, rulers and governors would be put in place by the empire that would support and enable the control of the empire while still giving the impression of local autonomy (2 Kings 25:22-24, John 19:12), and attempts would be made to change the culture and even the religion of those conquered nations (2 Kings 17:26&27).

History records the fearful events that unfolded during these empires, for instance the Holy Roman Empire or Heiliges Römisches Reich in German, not to be confused with the Roman Empire. It did much harm in central Europe in its first two periods, but the third Empire or Reich saw the devastating results of power and control being taken from many people and being entrusted into the hands of the few. The USSR saw so much bloodshed and oppression, along with the British Empire. These lessons from history should warn us of the danger of forcing different nations with different cultural and religious identities together. It is very rarely a good thing. The success of such efforts requires the

subjection of peoples, the destruction of identities, a mass of edicts and decrees and the unification under powerful political control.

Have the nations of Europe become part of a European empire? We certainly haven't been invaded by Europe, but could we have become a vassal state of the European Union? While this may sound extreme, many nations in history never understood their true status under the USSR, under Rome and under many other empires. We have to look at what the European Union is, how it functions and what effect it has on the member states.

What is the European Union?

Much has been written about the EU's foundation being about peace, and while there was an element of that in the thinking of the architects, primarily it was about trade - firstly in coal and steel between six nations, in 1950. Britain's relationship with what is now called the European Union began in 1961. Britain applied to join the EEC, but their application was vetoed by France - so much for peace and harmony! After a change in the French presidency in 1967, we applied to join again and negotiations began. Britain cut ties with the Commonwealth and joined the EEC in 1973, and in 1975 voted in a referendum to continue in the EEC. Little did Britain know what the EEC would become. In 1986 the Single European Act was signed, and in 1993 the Single Market was completed with the 'four freedoms' of: movement of goods, services, people and money. In the run up to 1993 was the period that saw the greatest taking of power and authority by what became the European Union, probably until the Lisbon treaty. No longer was this just a group of nations trading with each other, the "three pillars of the European Union" were now in play. Europe now had a parliament, a European Council, a Council of Europe (two different bodies), the European Commission, the Court of Justice of the European Union (not to be confused with the European Court of Human rights, though established by the Council of Europe, is not technically part of the European Union), the European Court of Auditors, and later came the European Central Bank and the EU's own currency, the Euro.

The Treaty of Amsterdam in 1999 saw further powers given over to the EU in areas including legislating on immigration, adopting civil and criminal laws, and enacting foreign and security policy. The Treaty of Lisbon came into force on 1 December 2009. Claims that there were no major changes were a smoke screen. Just some of the changes included, a long-term President of Europe, a Foreign Minister for Europe, as well as moving from unanimity voting to qualified majority voting in the

Council of the European Union in 45 areas of legislation. Nations could no longer block or vote down areas that were once considered so important that it should require unanimity voting.

How does it work?

The Commission

The Commission is made up of 28 members from every nation, but the members are legally bound to represent the interests of the EU as a whole rather than their home state. Only the Commission can propose law, and only the Commission has the power to ensure the EU rules are followed and to punish member states. It is also responsible for trade and competition issues.

The European Council and Council of Ministers

This is the place where heads of government (European Council) or ministers (Council of Ministers) meet. EU laws become part of national legislation after detailed negotiations between the Council and the European Parliament. They examine draft laws from the Commission.

The European Parliament

This is the only directly elected EU institution. They meet mainly in Brussels, but when it comes to voting and big decisions they all go to Strasbourg, the building based on Bruegel's painting of the Tower of Babel (see page 10, image 1&2). The Parliament's current MEPs are around 2 to 1 in favour of the EU and its purposes and aims.

The European External Action Service (Foreign Office)

The EU's new diplomatic service was one of the key innovations under the Lisbon Treaty, intended to give the EU "one voice" internationally. The EEAS has been very critical of Israel.

The Other Institutions

The Court of Justice of the EU's specific mission is to ensure "the law is observed...in the interpretation and application" of the Treaties of the European Union. It is used to exert the power of EU law on individuals, companies and even nations within the EU. The European Court of Auditors examines EU spending and has the power to suspend funding for various reasons, as it did to the regions of England in 2007. The European Central Bank's role includes maintaining price stability within the Eurozone, defining and implementing the monetary policy for the Eurozone, seeking tax harmonisation and conducting foreign exchange operations, enabling it to hold large power over the economies of nations within the Eurozone.

The Empire of the European Union?

National boundaries broken down

The absolute dogma of the EU is free movement of peoples. Even countries outside of the EU who join the European Economic Agreement. (The free trade arrangement, that Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein are signed up to) all still have to agree to free movement of people. Yet there is absolutely no need for this purely for the purpose of trade. Why is it so important to the EU? Because like the empires of old, the movement of peoples breaks down cultural and national identities - it helps hold the empire together. This dogma is so unpopular in many of the powerful nations in Europe, yet there is zero chance of changing this. Indeed, even if we voted to leave the EU, the EU will seek to force the free movement of people on us in exchange for trade. Does it matter? Well, it should do to us, firstly because God sets the boundaries of peoples and nations, but secondly because we have a particular Reformed Protestant faith in this country. Many come from Catholic countries, and Europe seem determined to add Turkey to the EU, a Muslim nation. It's not that we want to keep people out because we are uncharitable or uncaring, but because of the undermining of our Christian heritage and culture. Partly, as well, because there was a time when we gave those coming in the gospel, but now we seem to encourage them in their faith that is different from ours.

Decrees from the empire of Europe

Before Edward Heath signed the Treaty of Rome in 1972, all laws affecting the people of this country were made by their own directly elected parliament. The UK's accession to what was then called the Common Market transferred sovereignty over a good deal of law-making from Westminster and Whitehall to Brussels.

There are many who did not realise that this was part of the deal. They thought Britain was signing up to a free trade area that would also entrench the peace that Western Europe had enjoyed in the decades after 1945. But the "ever closer union" envisaged in the treaty required greater harmonisation of laws in order that each member state should operate on the same basis as far as possible.

The constitutional upheaval caused by membership of what is now the EU was the greatest in the country's history for over 300 years. As Prof. Anthony King observed in his book *The British Constitution*: "Not only did Parliament cease to be sovereign, Britain itself ceased to be an old-fashioned sovereign state. The fact of being a member of the

EU permeates almost the whole of the British government – to a far greater extent than most Britons seem to realise.”

Professor David Farrell of the University of Manchester said:
“For much of its life, the European Parliament could have been justly labelled a 'multi-lingual talking shop'. But this is no longer the case: the EP is now one of the most powerful legislatures in the world both in terms of its legislative and executive oversight powers.”

Think tank Open Europe researched through more than 2,000 of the UK government’s impact assessments for regulatory proposals and found that 72 per cent of the cost of regulation over the last ten years is EU-derived. It concluded: “In terms of absolute proportion, we estimate the figure to be around 50 per cent. This means that the EU now has huge regulatory powers. What’s more, in terms of relative impact – which is what matters – its powers over regulation exceed that of the UK government”. In 2007, 3,010 EU laws became UK law, while only 993 EU regulations were repealed - a net gain of 2,017 extra laws.

Since the Lisbon treaty, the EU has been able to propose laws in areas that had hitherto been the preserve of national governments and agreed by way of inter-governmental negotiation. The Treaty transferred 105 new “competencies” from the national to the EU level, covering policy areas including foreign, security, defence, trade, justice and economic policy - the single largest transfer of powers in the history of the European Union.

Without doubt the EU is certainly issuing edicts across its empire. Can we simply say no? The answer is no. The EU has its Court of Justice which is able to punish any nation state that has failed to comply or implement its laws purely upon the wishes of the European Commission (28 unelected people).

We also know taxes are taken, huge amounts without proper representation. The EU is one of the most undemocratic organisations in the western world, for which we pay handsomely.

We considered how empires would put in their kings, rulers and governors that would support the empire and enable control. The EU has a shocking record of political interference when elected governments are opposed to the EU.

1.



Above: "Tower of Babel" by Bruegel - 1563
Below: European Parliament – Strasbourg, France



2.

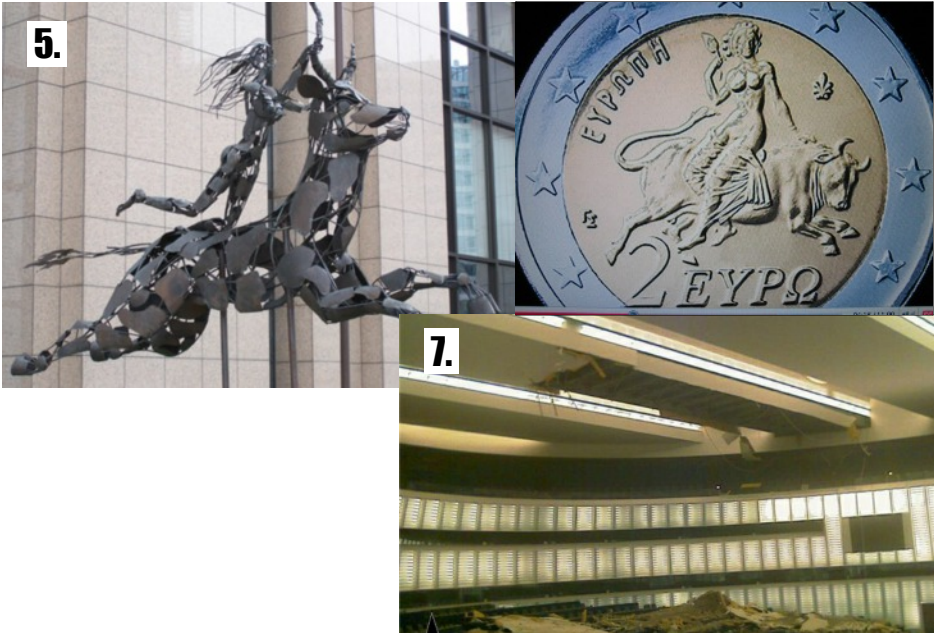


4.



We can all share the same star.

FREE4ALL



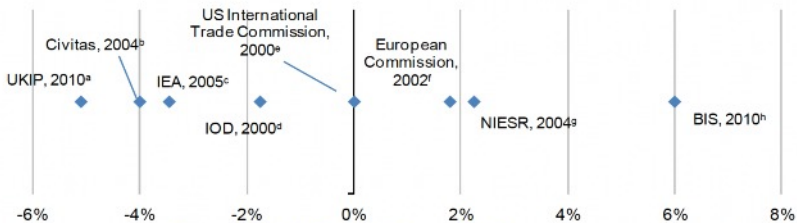
5.

7.

Selected estimates of the net benefits to the UK of EU membership

annual recurring cost/benefit as a proportion of GDP

N.B. the conclusions from the studies are not precisely comparable; see notes below for further details



^a UK Independence Party *How much does the European Union cost Britain?* Based on conclusion that 'for 2010, the combined direct and indirect costs of EU membership will amount to... £77 billion net'

^b Civitas *A cost too far?* 'Most likely' estimate of annual cost is put at 4% GDP per year

^c Institute for Economic Affairs (Minford et al) *Should Britain leave the EU?* Midpoint of estimated range of '3.2-3.7 per cent of GDP in ongoing costs'

^d Institute of Directors *EU membership – what's the bottom line?* Estimated net cost of 1.75% GDP per annum

^e US International Trade Commission *The impact on the US economy of including the UK in a free trade agreement with the US, Canada and Mexico* Estimate refers to the impact on UK GDP (-0.02%) of the UK withdrawing from the EU and 'joining' NAFTA

^f European Commission *The internal market – ten years without frontiers.* Estimate refers to the impact on EU GDP of the existence of the internal market

^g National Institute of Economic and Social Research *The macroeconomic impact of UK withdrawal from the EU.* Estimate refers to the permanent impact on the level of GDP of the UK withdrawing from the EU

^h Department for Business Innovation and Skills, *written evidence* to Lords EU Select Committee inquiry into Re-launching the Single Market. Estimate refers to the trade benefits of EU membership since the early 1980s and refers to impact of membership of *income per capita*. Based on argument that "EU countries trade twice as much with each other as they would do in the absence of the Single Market programme" and OECD estimates of the impact of trade exposure on income per capita.

It seems the political class in the UK seems so pro-EU, in spite of the clear euroscepticism within our nation. All of them talk of wanting to be part of a reformed Europe, but a reformed Europe doesn't exist. Nothing has changed, yet our leaders are determined we should stay in, come what may. Many of them are very upset that we, the people, should have a say - none more so than the EU itself.

We also considered how empires seek to change the culture and even the religion of the empire. The EU is a secular body; humanism is its core belief. There is no place for religion within the EU, it is secular and godless, and that's the way they like to keep it. Yet the majority of the EU is Christian or Catholic. The EU really doesn't have a place for religion because they believe they are 'god', the masters of the destiny of the people of Europe. In terms of culture, we now have a Europe day, a European flag and a European national anthem. The EU is promoted in our schools and where ever they spend our money that they have so graciously given back to us, they slap their flag on the project!

Have we been taken over by the empire of the European Union? I believe so.

The effect of the EU on other areas and possible effects of coming out

Economically

The single market is clearly one of the greatest benefits of membership of the EU. It is what many wanted and signed up to all those years ago. The European Economic Area (EEA) is the free trade agreement by which the EU, as well as Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway trade. The EEA gives us access to trade with over half a billion people, which is clearly a good thing. However, no member state of the EU can negotiate its own international trade agreement. Currently the EU has agreements or interim agreements with around 36 countries outside of the EU. The EU currently does not have trade agreements with the USA, Canada, Brazil, most of Asia and Australasia. We cannot create trade agreements with these countries; only the EU can. Our relationship has not always been beneficial with the EU. It is estimated that when the UK crashed out of the European Exchange Rate Mechanism, it cost the UK treasury £3.3 billion pounds.

Our EU contributions are currently set at £18 billion per year. However, £5 billion instantly comes back (currently) as part of our rebate. Of that £13 billion, we received just £4.5 billion towards projects, making our net contribution to the EU £8.5 billion in 2015. That is a net loss of

around £23.3 million a day. This is purely our EU membership fee. That doesn't pay for the nearly 50,000 well paid bureaucrats working for the various institutions which we also fund. Neither does it take into account the costs of implementing all of the EU directives and laws, in areas of government and the private sector. There is a clear economic benefit to being within EU, but there are clearly economic downsides as well.

What options are available to us if we come out? It is often stated that if we came out of the EU and we still wanted to trade with Europe, we would be left still bound by all the rules and under the power of the EU, without any say (much like Norway and Iceland). That is true if we join the EEA. There is a real danger that our political masters, following a leave vote, could then bring us back under the EU by joining the EEA - but is the EEA our only option? Not at all. The EU is already part of the World Trade Organisation (WTO). Upon leaving the EU we would immediately join up to the WTO. The rules under the WTO mean that EU nations could not treat us any less favourably than others in the EU, currently that would mean very low tariffs on many goods and services and immediate access to trade. There are some higher tariffs, for example cars and car parts, which we would undoubtedly look to get better agreements on. On top of that we would instantly be free to arrange trade deals with any nation we wish. We have some of the best diplomats in the world, historical links with many nations across the globe and one of the strongest economies in the developed world. Those agreements can be achieved. It is true to say that there are jobs directly linked to being part of the EU, but it is purely a matter of conjecture as to how many jobs would actually be lost if we left the EU. Beyond those who actually work for the EU, there are no facts on job losses.

For many economic bodies, the effect on Gross Domestic Product (GDP) leans one way or the other (see graph on page 11, image 8). Some believe we will be better off out, others better off in and others see any impact as negligible, with what we gain being offset by what we lose. Every group has their bias, and the simple answer is nobody knows. The suggestion that this is some great leap into the dark is exaggerated for sure, but economic planning, as the most recent budget has shown, is largely a leap in the dark. The European economy is anything but stable at the moment, and no one can predict what will happen next. The question may well be asked, are we better to be freed from the tax harmonisation and other financial restrictions that come with being part of the EU, to make our own swift response to any crisis, or would our economy be more secure aligned with the nations of the EU?

The EU's existence has created barriers of trade to other parts of the world. This has made Africa poorer as well as many of our Commonwealth nations whom we abandoned to gain access to the EU. By coming out of the EU, we would be free to create trade deals with Africa and enable them to trade their way out of poverty rather than being so reliant on foreign aid.

Economics is often the basis on which we decide elections. As Christians our decisions should not be based simply on wealth and the economy. It is a factor as a strong economy enables us to provide for those in need, but other factors should be important to us too.

Our Security

A section of the current debate on the EU surrounds security. In 2003 the EU laid out its own European Security Strategy. It considered the threats to the security of EU. Many have claimed that the EU, almost single handedly, is responsible for the peace in Europe following the Second World War, and that by coming out we may somehow be putting this at risk. Firstly, while it is true the EU has played a part in the peace and stability of Europe, so has NATO and the UN, as well as a simple recognition that we cannot go back to those awful days. The EU in its document acknowledge that *a large scale aggression by any member state is now improbable.*

The document probably rightly lists terrorism first in its key threats, but what does it plan to do about it? It talks with the same rhetoric that has had no impact on the terror threat posed. One thing is sure: the EU's strategy on tackling terrorism has failed. Since its production, we have had the Madrid bombing (2004), the murder of Dutch film maker Theo Van Gogh (2004), the 7/7 London bombings (2005), the Glasgow airport attack (2007), the Stockholm bombing (2010), the Frankfurt airport shootings (2011), the Toulouse and Montauban shootings (2012), the Bulgaria bus bombing (2012), the Lee Rigby killing as well as the knife attack on a French soldier the following day (2013), the Jewish Museum of Belgium shooting (2014), the two attacks in France, one with a knife and one using a car on the 21st and 22nd December 2014, the Paris attacks on Jewish targets (2015), the Copenhagen shootings (2015), the shooting of a French woman in April 2015, beheading in Lyon in June 2015, the train traveling from Amsterdam to Paris attack (2015), a series of terrorist attacks in Paris that killed 137 (2015) and most recently the bombing in Brussels. The idea that we are somehow safer within the EU from terrorism is unfortunately unfounded. Indeed, the Schengen border arrangements give terrorists free movement

throughout much of the EU, and while we are not part of it at the moment, it allows free movement right up to our coastline. The other problem we have, in security terms, is the amount of people coming in from outside of Europe and settling in mainland Europe. After being resident for 5 years in many EU nations they can apply for citizenship, not just to their own country, but also to the EU. This means they will then be entitled to live where ever they wish within the EU. The free movement of peoples throughout the EU has to be considered a threat to our own security. It is also a major threat with regard to organised crime, making the movement of trafficked people, drugs and weapons very easy indeed.

Many analysts also believe that the EU's advance eastwards has been seen by Russia as an act of aggression against them, and part of the cause for their advance into the Crimean region. If there is a flash point coming in Europe, it will undoubtedly be where the empire of Europe has advanced into the former USSR. There is already unrest within Latvia and Estonia. As the EU seeks further ties with Ukraine they certainly are not improving the chances of maintaining peace within Europe.

We have also seen the rising animosity between nations particularly in the Eurozone. These nations are very different, with very different approaches. Germany's enforced austerity on Greece has certainly not gone down well. Coming out of the EU may not dramatically improve our security as a nation, but it will enable us to have better control of our borders and to return criminals more easily.

Our Religious Liberty and Christian Cultural Heritage

Under EU directives, there is to be protection for religion and belief, and this is without doubt a good thing. Before such legislation in the UK, we didn't have these protections enshrined in law, but generally it wasn't needed previously. Very few discriminated against people for religious belief because religious people were once seen by employers as hard working, honest and trustworthy. The question has to be asked, what has created the current tensions and conflicts we see Christians face today?

To help understand the current situation we find ourselves in, we need to go back to the EU Equal Treatment Directives and their goals to ensure "equal treatment" regardless of age, sexual orientation, religion or belief and disability. This finally became an EU act in July 2008. This was the basis on which the UK's Equality Act of 2010 was born. These

pieces of legislation should have meant freedom of religion and belief in the workplace. Sadly the opposite has been true. This legislation has been used against many Christians and resulted in fines, loss of jobs and end of businesses. Peter and Hazelmary Bull, Christian B&B owners who only allowed married couples to share a room, the Methodist church having to change their equal opportunities policy as it fell foul of the act, and the Ashers Bakers who refused a cake order for a political campaign to support gay marriage, are a few examples of cases where the Equality Act was used against Christians. So is it that the EU act and resulting Equality Act are not protecting Christians? Why does it seem the LGBT rights trump religious rights?

When the EU directives were being considered, they foresaw this particular conflict. In the *Religion and Belief Discrimination in Employment - the EU Law* document, published in November 2006 by the European Commission, it considers *'there are several problematic issues that are likely arising in relation to religion and belief discrimination'*. After considering the particular conflicts of different groups rights and appropriate exemptions, there comes a statement that explains why so often the rights of Christians are subject to the rights of others. *"Although the right of freedom to have a religious belief is absolute under Article 9 ECHR, the right to manifest that belief is subject to the rights of others"*. In other words, the right of others is greater than the right to act in accordance with our righteous beliefs. We can be a Christian and the law defends our right to be a Christian, but not to live and act like a Christian.

In the same document it states; *"The Directive deems harassment to be a form of discrimination, where there is unwanted conduct related to religion and belief with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person and of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment"*. Here we see again how Christians have been dismissed or sanctioned for offering to pray for people, offering them a book, or having a religious debate. As we considered earlier, EU laws have to be followed. We can trace these laws that now discriminate against Christians in the workplace - back to the EU.

While coming out of the EU would be unlikely to cause a reverse of these directives and resulting legislation, it would cut off its influence and of course its authority over our legislative program. It must be understood that the EU is not like the UK parliament. The EU has no regard or place for God and Christianity, in its laws, institutions and its intentions; it is entirely secular and humanist. The poster they produced (see page 10,

image 4) shows two things. Not only do they treat Christianity the same as other religions but also communism; it also shows they see the EU as bigger than all those religions, saying we can all share the same star. It also contains the cross less than the hammer and sickle and other symbols.

The UK parliament, while it continues to enact ungodly legislation, still has both houses beginning the day with prayers. References to God appear in legislation. It also has at the end of the legislative process, the Royal assent. The position of our Queen may now be very much limited by her unwillingness to stop any legislation, but each week the Prime Minister must meet with her and discuss issues. Part of the Queen's Coronation Oath includes the following: *Will you to the utmost of your power maintain the Laws of God and the true profession of the Gospel? Will you to the utmost of your power maintain in the United Kingdom the Protestant Reformed Religion established by law?* To which the Queen replied, *"All this I promise to do"*. This is where we as a nation and the EU organisation are different. We have a Christian heritage that many want to see maintained. Coming out of the EU will not make us a Christian nation again, but it will free us from an institution that wants nothing to do with God.

Other issues of concern within the EU that we see in Scripture

As we considered earlier, what we see in the EU has striking similarities to what was trying to be achieved at the Tower of Babel. In Genesis 11:4 we read

They said, "Come, let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top will reach into heaven, and let us make for ourselves a name, otherwise we will be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth."

The people wanted to come together to make a name for themselves and reach into heaven. God set back their efforts, scattering them and confusing their language. Is the reversal of God's actions in Babylon even in the minds of those within the EU? Well, it was certainly in the mind of the architect who designed the Strasbourg EU Parliament building. It seems very much based on the painting *Tower of Babel* by Pieter Bruegel (see page 10, image 1&2). It's not the only EU image with that picture in mind - the poster (see page 10, image 3) produced with the phrase "Europe. Many tongues, one voice," contains the Tower of Babel from Bruegel's painting in a more modern form. It's hard to imagine those involved in creating these designs did not know the implication of what they were designing. The intention seems very much to be about reversing what God did, in scattering people into nations

with different languages. While we are on the subject of the EU building in Strasbourg, 3 weeks after the UK ratified the Lisbon Treaty, after we had been denied an EU referendum, part of the ceiling collapsed. The ceiling would have come down on the heads of five British MEPs if the chamber had been sitting at the time (see page 11, image 7).

Other images that we see from scripture taken up by the European Union are described as *the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her (Revelation 17:7)*. This image of the woman riding the beast is seen in the two Euro coin (see page 11, image 5). It is also seen depicted in statues like the one outside the European Council Building in Brussels (see page 11, image 6). The reason the EU use this image is because it's from the story of Europa in Greek mythology - but given the story is one of deception and rape, it is not clear why on earth the EU would want to depict Europa riding the beast, in the midst of deception and on the way to being raped. Surely a statue of Europa aside from the beast or bull would have been much more appropriate (not that we would want that either). Was God revealing to John something that we are to understand in our day? What about the beast then?

In Daniel 7, Daniel speaks of four beasts which seem to correlate with the four sections of Nebuchadnezzar's statue in Daniel 2. God had disclosed to Daniel that four empires would arise, which we know from history were the Babylonian, the Persian, the Greek and the Roman Empires, into which Jesus, the Rock, came and set up the Kingdom of God. In Daniel 7 these empires now represented as beasts appear again. The fourth beast, the Roman Empire is seen both in Daniel 7 and in Revelation 13 as having ten horns. Daniel is told, of this beast, that one horn will arise and as v21 says *I kept looking, and that horn was waging war with the saints and overpowering them* and v25 *He will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One, and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time*. Many people understand this to be the anti-christ or the man of lawlessness as described in 2 Thessalonians 2:3. If that is correct then it seems the anti-christ will arise out of some sort of revived Roman Empire. This fits in with Revelation 17 that described the beast as one that *was, and is not, and is about to come up*. While we would not want to be dogmatic on this point, many of us believe, and have believed for some time, that the EU fits in with much of what is being described. It seems it is not by accident that the treaty of Rome was signed in the ruins of the Roman Empire.

To leave or remain in the European Union - that is the question

It seems every politician talks of reforming the EU, that they want to see it changed; that they are not satisfied with it the way it is. The problem is, they have tried and failed to reform the EU. If we leave, we will be able to bring back powers to these shores and away from the 28 unelected commissioners. If we choose to remain, we choose to remain in whatever the EU becomes in the future. It has been 41 years since we had a vote on our relationship with this European institution. The changes have been huge. What will the next 41 years within the EU look like? None of us know what is ahead of us in or out of the EU, but we know One who does. We need to seek Him in prayer.

Have we been handed over to the EU in judgement?

The Lord has allowed us to be in the situation we are in, which seems, as described earlier, that we come under the control of another power, the power of the EU. Of course we understand there are principalities and powers at work that hold us within that control. Our only hope for deliverance is in God; we cannot deliver ourselves. If God has handed us over to the EU, the question is, is He willing to deliver us at this point in time? Time and time again throughout scripture, we see Israel and Judah forsaking the Lord, the Lord handing them over, the people humbling themselves and crying out to God for deliverance, and God showing mercy. If we are to come out of the EU, the battle will not be won with clever arguments about the economy. The battle is in the heavenlies, and we need to cry out to God that He would go into battle for us. We deserve judgement for the way we have turned our backs on the Lord. We must come confessing the sins of the nation, and to seek His face, that He may be gracious to us as a nation. Praise God, if we remain within the EU, God is mighty to keep His people, just as He kept those who honoured Him in Babylon.

James writes to a church and people scattered in the nations: *But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him (James 1:5)*. How we need God's wisdom at this time, His discernment, and to be like the sons of Issachar, who understood the times they were living in, and had a knowledge of what Israel should do. I pray that God may lead and guide each one us, and give us understanding as we pray.



About IFB

This booklet was written by Dave Borlase, Director of Intercessors for Britain. Intercessors for Britain is a non-denominational organisation that encourages people to pray regularly for our nation. We help encourage prayer with our bi-monthly prayer bulletin, weekly news updates on our website, and through Prayer and Bible days around the country. If you would like to know more about IFB or would like to join us, you can do so free of charge. Please see the contact details at the bottom of the page.

Our main London day of prayer was moved from January to June this year, and arranged around this time last year. The Lord obviously knew the timing of the referendum, as we happened upon the Saturday before the referendum, 18th June. We will certainly be taking up the issue of Europe during the day and Adrian Hilton, who wrote *The Principalities and Powers of Europe*, will be speaking, as well as others. We would be delighted if you join us to pray at this critical time! Full details are below.

Great Day of Prayer in London
Regent Hall (Salvation Army)
275 Oxford St, London W1C 2DJ

Saturday 18th June 2016
Event time: 10:30am - 6:00pm
Speakers will include: Adrian Hilton
(Author of "The Principalities and Powers of Europe")
along with Dave & Ray Borlase
Please bring a packed lunch

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