

“Here Comes the Beast” (Revelation 13:1-18)

One of the most remarkable tours available to visitors to Washington D.C. is the Bureau of Engraving and Printing. It is fascinating to learn about the process by which paper money is manufactured. One great task of the government is to make counterfeiting difficult. Many agents of the Treasury Department spend their entire careers tracking down fake money. On these tours, the most commonly asked question is, “What’s the best way to avoid receiving counterfeit bills?” The answer is always the same: “Just learn the marks of a true bill. Then you will not have any trouble spotting the fake ones.”¹

That guideline holds true for Revelation 13. In this chapter, we will see the emergence of an Unholy Trinity: the great Dragon, the Beast, and the False Prophet. This trio of wickedness will be bent on deceiving and destroying the world. Yet, the message of Revelation 13 and the rest of Scripture is: Maintain a close relationship with Jesus, the true One, and those who are cheap imitations of Him will never deceive or destroy you. Please turn in your Bible to Revelation 13.

Revelation 13 is composed of two major sections, each of which describes a beast. Verses 1-10 depict the Beast from “out of the sea.” This Beast represents civil and military power. Verses 11-18 describe the Beast from “out of the earth.” The second Beast represents religious and media power in service of the first Beast. Both Beasts are instruments of the Dragon to persecute the church and to deceive the unbelieving world.² In these two sections, God gives us two precautions that hold true not only for tribulation believers but also for believers of all ages, including ours.

1. Beware of satanic partnerships (13:1-10). In 13:1, John writes, “**And the dragon³ [Satan] stood on the sand of the seashore.⁴ Then I saw a beast⁵ coming up out of the sea...**” The word “beast” refers to a wild and ferocious animal.⁶ Yet, in this context, John is referring to a man who rules over and represents a particular nation (cf. Dan 7:17). The description “beast” points out two things. First, it portrays the brutal, bloody, uncontrolled, and wild character of the dictator and his system; it is inhuman. Second, the word “beast” portrays this man as the epitome and paramount outgrowth of the character of Satan who is himself called “the great red Dragon” (12:3). John watches this Beast “**coming up out of the sea.**” The implication is that the Dragon summoned the Beast out of the sea. Evidently, this was part of his plan to destroy the rest of the woman’s offspring (12:17). “**The sea**” represents the Abyss—the abode of Satan (9:11; 20:1-3), the Beast (11:7; 17:8), and some demons (cf. Luke 8:31; 2 Pet 2:4; Jude 6). (11:7; 17:8).⁷

This Beast is said to have “**ten horns and seven heads,⁸ and on his horns were ten diadems, and on his heads were blasphemous names**” (13:1b). Before we can begin to make some sense of this verse, we must recognize that in prophecy it is sometimes hard to determine when a passage is speaking about the king or the kingdom since the kingdom is the epitome of the king from whom it gets its character. For instance, even in the U.S., we often speak of the administration in power by the name of the president (i.e., the Bush administration). Likewise, a passage may refer to the king in one verse and the kingdom in the next, or vice versa. This is evidently the case here. Verses 1 and 2 look more at the kingdom, the empire; verse 3 includes both, and verses 4 and following refer more to the individual, the satanically controlled or possessed dictator. So “the beast” may refer to the end-time kingdom, the empire, or to the dictator or both.⁹

In 13:1-2, there is figurative language that must be explained.¹⁰ The “**ten horns**” are ten future kings who will rule over ten nations (17:12). The “**seven heads**” are seven historic Gentile kingdoms, which are represented by seven kings or rulers.¹¹ These Gentile powers or nations find their culmination in the Beast.¹²

The “**ten horns**” look at the future history of the Beast while the seven heads look at the past history (cf. Dan 7:24). The “**ten diadems**” are symbols of governmental authority (cf. 12:3). The diadems are placed on the horns rather than on the heads of the Beast to show that his claim to authority rests on brute force.¹³ The “**blasphemous names**” reflect the Beast’s opposition to God (cf. 13:5-6; 2 Thess 2:4). The Beast is evidently Antichrist, who is the head of a future empire (cf. 13:8, 18; 17:8).¹⁴

In 13:2a, John describes the Beast: “**And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion.**” In Daniel these three animals represented three kingdoms that previously ruled the world. The fourth kingdom that Daniel described (Dan 7:23) includes Antichrist’s kingdom. The Beast is a composite of all the beasts or empires throughout human history that have gone against God and His people.¹⁵

In 13:2b, John adds a very important note: “**And the dragon gave¹⁶ him his power and his throne and great authority.**” The Beast will derive his power and position from Satan (cf. 2 Thess 2:9). Instead of being “Spirit-filled” (Eph 5:18); He is “Satan-filled”! This is a powerful reminder of Satan’s control. Many people pursue power, pleasure, and possessions without even realizing that they have partnered with Satan’s agenda. In sixth grade, I began to listen to heavy metal music. Some of the bands that I listened to used the occult for the purpose of shock value. When I read interviews on these bands, they assured all their fans that they were not Satanists. At the time, I bought into this rational. I liked the music so much that I chose to ignore the lyrics and the lifestyles. Yet years down the road, I realized that these bands were obviously glorifying Satan. It may have been initially unintentional and innocent in their minds, yet Satan used these rock stars like marionettes. This remains true today. Every musician has an agenda. It is positive or negative, selfish or unselfish, or a little of both. We must be able to discern what we’re listening to. Am I telling you what kind of music you should listen to? No, that is between you and God (and maybe you and your parents). I’m just encouraging you to be wise.

In 13:3-4, the plot thickens. John writes, “**I saw one of his heads as if¹⁷ it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed.**¹⁸ **And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast; they worshiped the dragon because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, ‘Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?’**” Most likely the Beast is killed (assassinated by a sword/knife, cf. 13:14) and brought back to life. Scripture is silent as to the source of the healing. If the healing of the Beast does refer to a physical resuscitation, no doubt the forces of Satan will take credit for such a work when it occurs.¹⁹ This is interesting: Jesus rises from the dead and the world refuses to believe. But Satan’s messiah rises and the whole world is amazed and forms a church to worship him (13:4, 12, 14). The Beast not only rules, he is idolized. The present celebrity culture shows us how easily that could happen. This demonstrates the utter depravity of people. During the tribulation, spiritual realities become crystallized. There are only two groups/kinds of worshippers: the Beast and the Lamb. This is also true today even though we have a multitude of religions. Satan desires all religions to worship him. The expression, “**Who is like the beast?**” seems to be a spoof of Old Testament praises of God.²⁰ “Who is like You among the gods, O Lord?” (Exod 15:11). Later the Lamb will prove superior to the Beast (14:1-5; 17:14; 19:11-21) but during this period of the tribulation, the Beast reigns.

However in 13:5-8, it becomes clear that Satan and the Beast can’t do a single thing without permission from God.²¹ In 13:5-6, John writes, “**There was given to him²² a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies, and authority to act for forty-two months was given to him. And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, that is, those who dwell in heaven.**” The word “**blaspheme**” means “to harm one’s reputation through defaming speech.”

The Beast poured forth blasphemies against God (His person and works), His name (defamation of character), and those who are in heaven. But note that he only has authority to act for 42 months. This is a powerful reminder that God limits the extent of evil. We must always remember to trust in God's power.

In 13:7-8, John goes on to record, **"It was also given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them, and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him. All who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain."**²³ The Beast will wage war against believers and overcome them (i.e., kill them, 13:15). Through this victory, he will become a worldwide dictator (Dan 7:21, 23). No other ruler has ever been able to rule the entire world. Again, we see that the entire world will worship him. This is Satan's ultimate goal: to be worshipped as God.

Here is John's further observation dealing with the problem of evil. Although God has permitted evil, yet from the beginning He planned the ultimate remedy for overcoming evil: the sacrificial death of His Son. Jesus was not only slain in the first century, He was slain from eternity in terms of God's eternal plan (Eph 1:4). Before creation God chose you to have a relationship with Him (cf. Rev 17:8; Eph 1:4). Despite what suffering you go through in this life, your name is written in the Book of Life. God doesn't have a cosmic eraser. You're secure in Christ. It is this security that ought to compel you to live for Him.

After giving some hope in 13:9-10a, John shares a tough bit of news: **"If anyone has an ear, let him hear."²⁴ If anyone is destined for captivity, to captivity he goes; if anyone kills with the sword, with the sword he must be killed."** In light of the coming imprisonment and death of even more Christians the readers are to persevere. This is what John means when he writes, **"Here is the perseverance and the faith"²⁵ of the saints"** (13:10b). These fatalistically sounding words are not meant to discourage the believers, but to tell them that given the shortness of the time, it is better to go to jail or submit to death, rather than hold out for one's own continued earthly existence.²⁶ Because heaven awaits us, earth and its freedoms can be forfeited without real loss.

This verse is a reminder that Christians are not to take up arms and fight or go into survivalist mode. God calls us to accept our fates without resisting. The answer is not to fight but to be faithful unto death (2:10). We can fulfill this calling as we realize that we never have to fear. God is still in control even in the time of great authority for the Dragon. The emphasis here is that there are no accidents, what God has destined will happen. One of the greatest prayers that you can pray is, "God, grant me supernatural perseverance when evil comes my way. Deliver me from the Evil One (Matt 6:13). Grant me perseverance in my relationship with You. Grant me perseverance in my marriage and ministry. God's goal for every believer is to "present every man complete in Christ" (Col 1:28b).

2. Beware of satanic religions (13:11-18). In 13:11, John writes, **"Then I saw another"²⁷ beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb and he spoke as a dragon."** The second Beast is called the "False Prophet" elsewhere in Revelation (16:13; 19:20; 20:10). This Beast comes **"up out of the earth."** The contrast between the earth and sea could simply be that the former arises first and at the time of terrible chaos among the nations (who are like the raging sea, Isa 57:20) when people are fearful and crying for "peace and safety" and for a world ruler to settle world conditions. The second Beast may come on the scene after world conditions have been settled somewhat, when chaos has given place to some order and a more stable government has settled in human society (the earth). This second Beast comes as a wolf in sheep's clothing (Matt 7:15) but his association and identity becomes clear.

Satan's hand in history is seldom ugly in appearance at the time. It is only ugly in retrospect. There is a

reason, I believe, why the Beast and the False Prophet are both described as beasts. It is because they will not initially appear as such. The awesome power of the first Beast and the stunning signs and speech of the second will dazzle the men who dwell on the earth. Their ugliness is exposed by their description in Revelation 13 because that is the way saints need to perceive them. Remember that Satan appeared to Eve as a beautiful creature, not as a dragon. God wants us to see Satan and his servants as they are; Satan wants to appear as an angel of light (cf. 2 Cor 11:14).

In 13:12, the Beast **“exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence. And he makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose fatal wound was healed.”** The Greek word translated **“exercises”** or **“performs”** (*poieo*) is used eight times in 13:12-16. The False Prophet is giving performances—counterfeit performances. The goal is to bring about worship. The truth is Christianity is a threat to world religion. Because Christianity claims to be mutually exclusive, world ecumenical religion must put it down. Unity at all costs will be the theme of the future in order to obtain syncretism in religion. World religion must eliminate religions that claim distinction.

The Dragon and the two Beasts mentioned in chapters 12 and 13 are a counterfeit of the divine Trinity. The Dragon seeks worship that belongs only to God. The first Beast seeks to rule the world, which is Jesus Christ’s prerogative. The second Beast glorifies the first Beast, which is a counterfeit of the Holy Spirit’s ministry of glorifying Christ.

John writes in 13:13 that **“He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down out of heaven to the earth in the presence of men.”** Like Elijah in the Old Testament and the two witnesses in Rev 11, the second Beast will even be able to call down fire from heaven. The purpose of these signs is to authenticate the authority of the first Beast. Not all miracles are of God, for the second Beast performs these miracles in the presence and authority of the first Beast (13:2). No discerning Christian trusts any and every miracle. He or she must ask the question, “Is this miracle demonic or divine?” Let us never lose sight of the fact that false teachers, prophets, and “christs” can have great power and do many strange and seemingly wonderful things (cf. Matt 24:5, 11, 23-24; 2 Thess 2:9-12). The test of a true prophet is not just his ability to perform great wonders (cf. Deut 18:20-22), but also his fidelity to the revealed Word of God (cf. Deut 13:1-3).

In 13:14-15, John writes, **“And he deceives those who dwell on the earth because of the signs which it was given him to perform in the presence of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image²⁸ to the beast who had the wound of the sword and has come to life. And it was given to him to give breath to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast would even speak and cause as many as do not worship the image of the beast to be killed.”** The greatest sign—the world makes an image/idol of the Beast, and the False Prophet breathes life/breath/spirit into it. This image then gives orders to kill all who fail to worship the Beast. Satan is at his best when he tries to copy the work of God. Satan loves to counterfeit God’s work.

My boys love to draw. They are pretty amazing artists. They can draw quite a bit, free hand. They possess amazing creativity. They take after their mother. Their father, on the other hand, used to trace or carbon copy comic strips and then present them to his parents as his own. They put my artwork on the fridge like most proud parents do. But I knew it was a forge job.

The result of this great miracle is found in 13:16-17, when the False Prophet **“causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free men and the slaves, to be given a mark on their right hand or on their forehead,²⁹ and he provides that no one will be able to buy or to sell, except the one who has the mark, either the name of the beast or the number of his name.”**

During the tribulation period, the False Prophet will cause all the peoples of the world to receive a mark. The mark will likely be a technological advancement. Currently, we can identify people by using voice prints or laser scans of their retina. Scientists have even developed a computer chip small enough to be imbedded in your fingertip. It is worth mentioning that the choice of the right hand or forehead is significant. Both locations are conspicuous. The mark cannot be hidden. It is given some place publicly visible. Satan knows what Christ and the writers of Scripture teach: our faith is a public thing.

The effect of the mark is economic. No buying or selling. Think about it! No food, gas, electricity, home, car, clothes. What would you do? No seed to plant. Time of famine, and bread is \$100 a loaf, so who will share it? That's the "buying" part. Also can't sell, therefore no work, no garage sales, or classified ads. There will be enormous pressure to be marked! Believers will lose their jobs and possessions, but God will reward them for all that they have lost. In Mark 10:29-31, Jesus said, "Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or farms, for My sake and for the Gospel's sake, but that he will receive a hundred times as much now in the present age, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and farms, along with persecutions; and in the age to come, eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last, first."

John closes with this exhortation: "**Here is wisdom**³⁰ [or "This demands wisdom"]. **Let him who has understanding calculate**³¹ **the number of the beast, for the number is that of a man; and his number is six hundred and sixty-six.**" Just type in 666 into your search engine and see how many hits you get! Everyone is trying to figure out who he is. There have been many suggestions like Kennedy, Kissinger, Clinton, and Hussein. My two favorites are Gorbachev (because of the birthmark on his head) and Ronald Wilson Regan (because of the six letters in each of his three names). Christians have cried "Wolf" so often on this that they have totally lost credibility, so that when the real guy shows up (we might see him on the horizon), no one will listen.

While at the present period of history it seems unthinkable that such a state of affairs could occur, we must remember that we are only 70 years removed from the rise of Hitler and Stalin, and it is pure arrogance to think something similar could not happen again. If anyone could solve the terrorist crises, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and the unrest in Africa, and bring peace to our troubled world, people would rush to worship such a person.³² As Francis Schaffer said, "People will give up freedom to gain security." That is the basis for the rise of dictators in a lot of cases. This is the time when people shout "Peace and safety!" and the Antichrist promises it to them (1 Thess 5:1-3).

Where does your peace and safety lie today? Are you resting in Christ? If so, you have nothing to fear. But I warn you, beware of satanic partnerships and religion. Seek to beware of any pressures (e.g., political, religious, or economic) that attempt to pull you away from Christ.

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Notes

¹ Revised from Kendell H. Easley, *Revelation: HNTC* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1998), 237.

² Rev 13 is particularly dependent upon Daniel 7. It is only out of the context of the Old Testament prophets in general and the 7th chapter of Daniel in particular that we will adequately grasp the message of our text.

³ There is a textual problem associated with the last sentence of Revelation 12, the solution of which will determine whether we understand that it is John (“I”) who is standing on the seashore or the Dragon (“he”). The difference in the Greek text is the presence or absence of but one letter, the equivalent of our letter “n.” The matter is not of great import, for only the emphasis would change in either case. If it was the Dragon that stood on the seashore, it would further emphasize the close relationship between chapters 12 and 13, of the coming forth of the Beasts and Satan’s frustrations and failures.

⁴ In Revelation 13:1a in our English Bibles, we find him standing on the seashore with the Beast rising up out of the sea, but in the Greek text this sentence is Revelation 12:18.

⁵ Hollywood movies like the Omen, Damien, Rosemary’s Baby, The Devil’s Advocate, and End of Days have focused on the Beast (i.e., the Antichrist).

⁶ The term “beast” is to be contrasted with “living creature” (6:3, 5, 7).

⁷ The ancient world often associated evil with the sea and used the sea as a figure for the Abyss (cf. Job 16:12-13; Ps 74:13-14; 87:4; 89:9-10; Isa 27:1; 51:9-10; 57:20; Dan 7:3; Rom 10:7).

⁸ John pictures the Lamb (i.e., Jesus) with seven horns and seven eyes (Rev 5:6).

⁹ This is supported by the following: (1) Revelation 17:10 tells us the seven mountains are kings. This could indicate that the mountains are symbolical for the kingdoms these seven kings represent. (2) Rome is known as the city of seven hills, but the hills of Rome are not mountains. (3) The term mountain is commonly used in Scripture as an image of a kingdom (Ps 30:7; Isa 2:3; Dan 2:35, 45; Jer 51:5). (4) But more importantly, chapter 17 deals with the harlot system of Babylon which goes all the way back to the time of Nimrod and all these Gentile world powers have been her lovers and supporters, not Rome alone (cf. 17:1-2, 15). It is more likely that the seven mountains refer to seven successive Gentile kingdoms, which go way back, far beyond Rome. See Hampton Keathley III, *Studies in Revelation* (www.bible.org: Biblical Studies Foundation, 1997), 223-24.

¹⁰ The repetition of heads, horns, and diadems (Rev 12:3) suggests that there is a close affinity between the Dragon and this Beast. Yet there are some differences in the descriptions of these heads, horns, and crowns.

¹¹ The beast had seven heads that apparently represent the remaining seven rulers of nations after three of them disappear (Dan 7:8).

¹² The nations refer to the major world empires up to the time of Rome and which also were connected with the nation of Israel and her enslavements. These were: (1) **Egypt**: This was the first great world empire and the cause of Israel’s enslavement before entrance into the land. (2) **Assyria**: Historically this was the next great empire which took the northern kingdom of Israel into captivity in 722 B.C. (3) **Babylon** or the Chaldean empire: This is where Daniel’s prophecies begin and where we have the captivity of Judah, the southern kingdom. In Daniel’s prophecies he does not list the three preceding Gentile powers because his prophecies look forward only from his time in history to the final Gentile power and the return of the Lord. But Revelation 13 and 17 both look back (the seven heads) and forward (the ten kings). (4) **Medo-Persia**: This Gentile power followed Babylon and was the kingdom under which a remnant of Israel were allowed to return to the land to rebuild the city and the temple (cf. Ezra and Nehemiah). (5) **Greece**: This was the kingdom of Alexander and his successors who likewise ruled over the land of Palestine. (6) **Rome**: The Roman Empire of New Testament times was the empire of the emperors who reigned from before Christ: Augustus (30 B.C. - A.D. 14), to Domitian when Revelation was written (A.D. 81-96), and afterwards. During this time, Jerusalem was destroyed and the Jews dispersed worldwide (A.D. 70 - A.D. 135). Later the Roman Empire divided into the eastern and western divisions (the two legs of the image in Daniel 2) and finally fell, becoming fragmented into many nations. (7) What about the seventh head? Revelation 17:10-11 explains the seventh head. It is really a future kingdom though it has historical roots in the sixth kingdom. Revelation 17:10 says “five are fallen.” These five are Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia and Greece. “One is,” which is the sixth, the Roman empire of John’s day. “And the other is not yet come,” this is the revived Roman empire, the ten nation confederation or the ten horns under the leadership of the white horse rider in the first half of the tribulation. Compare 17:11 with 17:8, “The Beast which you saw was (refers to his past history, old Rome), and is not (does not presently exist; from John’s standpoint it would soon pass from the scene, i.e., the fall of Rome), and is about to come up (refers to the revived Roman empire).” Now in 17:11, this Beast, the Roman Empire represented by its king, becomes an eighth kingdom while at the same time being one of the seven, specifically, the seventh. The eighth refers to the imperial form of the revived

Roman Empire in the last half of the Tribulation under the power of the dictator, the man of lawlessness or the antichrist who is also called the beast. See Keathley III, *Studies in Revelation*, 223-24.

¹³ Robert H. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation: NICNT* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 250.

¹⁴ Robert L. Thomas, *Revelation 8-22* (Chicago: Moody, 1995), 153.

¹⁵ Grant R. Osborne, *Revelation: ECNT* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002), 492

¹⁶ Elsewhere it is God who gives authority to do things (Revelation 6:2, 4, 8, 11; 7:2; 8:2, 3; 9:1, 3, 5; 11:1, 2; 12:14; 13:5, 7, 14, 15; 16:8; 19:8; 20:4).

¹⁷ The word “if” does not appear in the Greek. Literally the Greek says, “as slain unto death.”

¹⁸ See Gregory H. Harris, “The Wound of the Beast in the Tribulation,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 156:624 (October-December 1999): 459-68.

¹⁹ The possibility of the Beast’s return to life (with either God’s sovereign permission or His active working) should not be readily ruled out. In other words it is not impossible that the Antichrist should return to life because of the unique status of the tribulation and the increased capacity of satanic power during that time, as well as God’s broadening the parameters of what He will either permit or accomplish directly. In support of the view that this wound was fatal is the fact that identical language is used of Christ’s death and resurrection. Revelation 5:6 describes the Lamb “as if slain,” the same words used of the wound received by the Beast.

²⁰ Cf. Exod 15:11; Ps 35:10; 113:5; Isa 40:18, 25; 46:5; Jer 49:19; Mic 7:18.

²¹ Four times in Rev 13:5-7, the original text notes that the Beast was given something: a mouth (13:5); authority for 42 months (13:5); authority to make war (13:7); and authority over people (13:7).

²² God’s sovereignty: Everything the two Beasts do occurs only because God allows them to do so (13:5-8, 14-15), and the saints submit to God because He tells them to do so (13:9-10). Also the great works of the Beast are mere counterfeits of what Christ and His servants have already done (13:3, 14).

²³ It has been debated whether “from the foundation of the world” modifies “the Book of Life written” or “the slain Lamb.” The word order favors “slain” as the antecedent. However, the parallel in Revelation 17:8 favors “written.”

²⁴ “If any one has an ear, let him hear” (cf. Matthew 11:15; 13:9; Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22). It is worth noting that the oft-repeated phrase “to the churches” is excluded. This supports the notion that the church has already been raptured.

²⁵ The noun “faith” (*pistis*) is only found four times in Revelation (2:13, 19; 13:10; 14:12). But it is found in critical junctures of the book. Interestingly, the verb “believe” (*pisteuo*) does not occur at all.

²⁶ My friend, Bob Deffinbaugh writes, “The contest of these verses (Jer 42:17, 22; 43:11) helps us understand their meaning. After the first waves of Babylonian assault on Jerusalem and Judea, some faithful Jews still remained in (or had returned to) Jerusalem. Fearing that the Babylonian army was yet to wage another campaign on Jerusalem, the people were considering whether or not to flee to Egypt, where they thought they would be protected from the Babylonians. They came to Jeremiah for a word of divine guidance, and these words are a part of his response. Jeremiah assured these people that they would be safe if they remained in Jerusalem. Even though they might be led into Babylonian captivity, God would protect them and once again bring them back into their land. He warned the people that if they sought safety in Egypt, there would be no security there at all. Instead, the very things they dreaded, “the sword, famine, and pestilence,” would overtake them there. Their only security was to trust in the Word of God. I believe that this context and the message of Jeremiah fits very well into the setting of Revelation 13:1-10. The perseverance of the saints must rest in their confidence in the Word of God. They will be safe only when they continue to trust only in Him. Lest one should consider “bowing the knee” to the beast so as to save their life, let them be reminded in Jeremiah’s words that death is inevitable, if death is the will of God. One will not escape captivity or the sword if this is God’s will. Such should not be dreaded by those who trust in the One who died and rose again, and who will give them deliverance from the second death.” Robert Deffinbaugh, Unpublished notes on Revelation.

²⁷ Gk. *allo*, means, “another of the same kind.”

²⁸ The image is mentioned three times here in this chapter and in 14:9, 11; 15:2; 16:2; 19:20 and 20:4. This image becomes the center of the false worship of the Beast and the focal point of the final state of apostasy and idolatry.

²⁹ In Deuteronomy 6:8 God told the Jews to place the Shema (6:4) on their hands and foreheads. In Ezekiel 9:4 the Lord required that the Hebrew letter *tau* be placed on the foreheads of all who had repented of the idolatry of the nation, indicating that they belonged to Him.

³⁰ In a context like this, “here” (*ode*) draws a conclusion from the previous statement (“in this case, moreover,” see BDAG). Thus, John is saying that “in light of” the coming mark of the Beast, the readers need wisdom. Due to the critical nature of this “wisdom” here, it may be better to translate “This demands...” See Osborne, *Revelation*, 519.

³¹ Gk. *psephizo*, “to count, compute, reckon” (cf. Luke 14:28 the only other place the word is used in the New Testament). This word was used of calculating the numerical value of a word or number, of voting, of a vote in the sense of resolving to do something. But it also meant to calculate in order to arrive at a value (cf. Lev 27:23 where this word is used in the LXX translation of the OT Hebrew).

³² Osborne, *Revelation*, 522.