Who *is* like unto the beast?

Revelation chapter 13 is a recasting of the Book of Daniel as the following comparison table demonstrates:

Daniel	Revelation 13
Nebuchadnezzar becomes a beast **4.25**	A beast **(v.1)**
(Nebuchadnezzar) like a lion **7.4**	**…**mouth of a lion **(v.2)**
A second, like to a bear **7.5**	…the feet of a bear **(v.2)**
Another, like a leopard….four heads **7.6**	…like unto a leopard **(v.2)**
Fourth terrible beast with ten horns **7.7**	…and ten horns **(v.1)**
Total seven heads ten horns	…having seven heads and ten horns **(v.1)**
The king spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty? **4.30**	… his heads the name of blasphemy **(v.1)** her forehead Mystery Babylon **(17.5)** That great city Babylon **(18.10)**
…and dominion was given to it **7.6**	…the dragon gave him his power **(v.2)**
I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints… **7.21**	Who is able to make war with him? **(v.4)**
great words which the horn spake **7.11**	a mouth speaking great things **(v.5)**
yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time **7.12** …*it shall be* for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these *things* shall be finished **12.7**	….and power was given unto him to continue forty *and* two months **(v.5)**
….and prevailed against them **7.21**	If anyone is to go into captivity, into captivity he will go. If anyone is to be killed with the sword, with the sword he will be killed. This calls for patient endurance and faithfulness on the part of the saints. **(v.10 NIB)**
A ram which had two horns **8.3**	He had two horns like a lamb **(v.11)**
Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold **3.1**	they should make an image to the beast **(v.14)**
whoso falleth not down and worshippeth …(is killed) **3.6**	…would not worship the image of the beast should be killed **(v.14)**

The Apocalypse reuses the imagery of Daniel in order to depict a beast rising out of the sea. However, whereas the empires in Daniel were successive, the Apocalypse depicts a composite beast[1] with the focus falling on the seventh head as this head has ten horns (the horns are therefore not evenly distributed over all seven heads).

The previous beast (the dragon) also had ten horns with seven crowns on seven heads denoting seven authorities which we identified with the seven rulers enumerated by Luke. Note that the crowns are on the heads of the dragon but on the horns of the sea beast. It would seem that whereas a crown on the head is generic a crown on a horn is specific i.e., a particular individual (king).[2] The dragon crowns were a collection of Idumean (Edomite) and Roman rulers, who together with the Jewish priestly establishment aligned against the pre-70 church. The dragon transfers power to the sea-beast which now has ten crowns. In other words we have a continuation of **religious persecution** against the "saints" (the church) and at the core is **Judaism including temple worship** (the glorious house built in Babylon). Therefore, an explanation must be sought beyond power struggles between Rome and Parthia or the fate of the Jewish nation *per se* --- it must be sought in how these power struggles affected the early second century. In Daniel the terrible beast with ten horns was identified with the persecuting power of Antiochus Epiphanes **not with Rome.**[3] Therefore, the Roman Empire plays no part in the sea beast with ten crowns. In fact, the composite sea beast emphasises the **Babylonian aspect.** King Nebuchadnezzar, who erected an image (of the beast) and is depicted as a lion in the empire visions of Daniel, was actually transformed into a beast by his mental disease. The "mouthpiece" of the beast in Rev 13 is therefore the "lion mouth" (Rev 13.2) as the lion of the Danielic visions symbolised Nebuchadnezzar. What does the lion mouth say? It speaks great things and blasphemy (Rev 13.5) – the analogy is Nebuchadnezzar's boast regarding "Great Babylon" in Dan 4.30. It should be recognized that Daniel 4 functions as a Midrash against the Jewish nation, not just a condemnation of a foreign king.[4] The attitude of king Nebuchadnezzar typifies the attitude of the Jewish nation that was sent into exile (and established a base in Shinar). Further, the blaspheming "lion mouth" also mirrors the hubris and arrogance of the little horn (Antiochus Epiphanes = god manifest) who desecrated the temple (trampled the host) with the true temple now represented in Revelation by the persecuted saints.

Therefore the sea-beast represents the Jews of the Parthian Empire with their religious schools, their Exilarchcate and their fanaticism with tradition and Law. The Parthian Empire subsumed the neo-Babylonian Empire, Medo-persia and parts of the Seleucid Greek Empire belonging to the "little horn" (Armenia, Cappadocia, Pontus etc)[5]. The sea-beast is therefore an accurate portrayal of the Parthian Empire **rising out of the Persian Gulf.**

However, it was not the Parthian Empire that was responsible for the persecution of the church but many of the Jews from the Jewish Parthian community that supported Bar Kochba's rebellion in Judea. In other words the persecution of Jewish-Christians that occurred during the Judean bar Kochba rebellion against Rome was a consequence of the support offered by Babylonian Jews.

The Roman Emperor Trajan's victories against Parthia were short lived and Hadrian reached a peace treaty that accommodated the Parthians ---they had no interest in supporting a Judean revolt (Bar Kochba) against Rome and remained "neutral". However, within Parthia there were large numbers of Jews living in semi-independent satrapies that did support and coordinate the rebellion by sending arms etc. The ten crowns of the sea-beast are not as easily identifiable as the seven crowns of the dragon as we have no Luke commentary for this later period. Suffice to say that they were religious authorities within the Jewish community (the Exilarch[6] and rabbinical heads of the torah schools) and Jewish rulers in the various satrapies. Many of these rulers wore crowns or turbans and the Persian sash of high office the appropriateness of which was debated by later rabbis.[7] Nebuchadnezzar was a "King of Kings" (Ezek. 26.7, Dan 2.37) and the Persian monarchs that followed (like Artaxerxes) also styled themselves as "King of Kings" (Ezra 7.12) this titular epithet was used by the Babylonian and then the Persian monarchs[8] because they ruled over minor kings and semi-autonomous provinces. This Persian/Babylonian titular epithet is also used to describe Christ in Rev.17.14 and 19.16 [9] and would have been familiar to Parthian Jews and first century Christians and would not be mistaken for the titular epithets used by Roman emperors.[10]

A number of candidates for the "crowns" are possible for example, Adiabene (Adiabenian rulers converted to Judaism from paganism in the 1st century), [11] and Media also remained subject to the Arsacids or Parthians, who changed the name of Rhagae, or Europus, into Arsacia, and divided the country into five small provinces. Elymais or Elamais was also a semi-independent state of the 2nd century BCE to the early 3rd century CE, frequently a vassal under Parthian control, and located at the head of the Persian Gulf in the present-day region of Khuzestan. Hatra was an ancient city in the Ninawa Governorate and al-Jazira region of Iraq. Hatra became an important fortified frontier city and withstood repeated attacks by the Roman Empire, and played an important role in the Second Parthian War. It repulsed the sieges of both Trajan (116/117 CE) and Septimius Severus (198/199 CE). The Parthian Empire even had satrapies in Afghanistan and Pakistan (the Indo-Parthian kingdom).

The Parthian Empire itself did not offer military support (troops) to the Judean uprising against Rome but turned a blind eye to Jewish militants living within her realms. It was, after all, to their advantage if Rome was weakened and the creation of an independent Jewish buffer state would have suited Parthian policy.[12] So, while they did not actively support the rebellion they certainly did nothing to prevent the Romans getting a bloody nose. Jacob Neusner summarises the situation as follows:

> "Only with the advent of Vologases in 51 did the situation begin to stabilize. Supported by the Greeks and opposed by the Parthian nobles, he was eager to win Jewish allies as well, and so very likely created a Jewish ethnarch, known later on as the *resh galuta*, or Exilarch, to administer the affairs of the Jewish community. The destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem further necessitated some such step, even had local conditions not required it, for the Parthian government had to take measures to ensure that its local Jewish community would not be subjected to the decrees of a Jewish regime subservient to Rome. One gains the impression, therefore, that Babylonian Jewry played a significant and in some ways central role in Parthian political affairs. I should suppose that its location in the heart of the western satrapies and its considerable influence across the frontier lent it greater importance than it would have otherwise enjoyed. In any event, not only did the Parthians have to attend to the "Jewish problem," but the Palestinian government also had to pay attention to its "Babylonian problem." It is perfectly clear that whoever governed Palestine would have to consider the potential whether hostile or benevolent of a large community situated across a contested border. Herod, a while earlier, had tried to cultivate Babylonian Jewish friendship by appointing a Babylonian priest to the high priesthood of Jerusalem. The Jews across the Euphrates had long prided themselves on their superior genealogy, and the priesthood in particular supposedly preserved its line without "contamination"; hence it was a shrewd and meaningful gesture". [*Op., cit.,* p., 70-71]

Rabbi Akiva visited the Exilarch in Mesopotamia to garner support for the revolt. Many of the Jews living in the Parthian Empire did not support the uprising as it would have interrupted their lucrative trade with the Roman Empire. Although Akiva's mission did not achieve unqualified success there can be no doubt that he recruited to his cause. It is known that 24,000 "Torah students" (think here of the Taliban) died in the Bar Kochba rebellion.[13] At least some of these would have been recruited by Akiva from the academies in Parthia. This was a "religious war" and Christians who did not support the false messiah were regarded as traitors.

It is interesting to reflect on the origins of the Jews in Parthia as they were probably not all the remnant of descendants of the Babylonian exile of Judah in BCE 586. The "house of Joseph" (Ephraim and Manasseh) had been exiled about 136 years previously by the Assyrians and (unlike Judah) never returned from exile giving rise to the myth of the "ten lost tribes" of Israel.[14] In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria, and placed them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes. (2 Kings 17:3–6). The term "cities of the Medes" mentioned above may be a corruption from an original text "Mountains of Media".[15]

It is beyond the remit of this book to delve into the geography or history of the ten tribes but suffice to say that Israelites from the "house of Joseph" must have dwelt in the Parthian Empire alongside Jews (Judeans) from the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. It is unlikely that the "ten tribes" were completely absorbed by the surrounding peoples even though Rabbi Akiva stated that the "house of Joseph" would not return from the captivity.[16] From the book of Acts (2.9) we know that, "Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia" (all Jews [Judeans] and Israelites) made annual pilgrimages to worship at the Jewish Temple during the Feast Days. Wikipedia states; "Many Persian Jews claim to be descendants of Ephraim. Further afield, in India the Telugu Jews claim descent from Ephraim, and call themselves Bene Ephraim, relating similar traditions to those of the Mizo Jews, whom the modern state of Israel regards as descendants of Manasseh".[17] There is also relevant genetic research pointing to relationships between Assyria and certain Jewish communities demonstrating that they were probably not all absorbed by the surrounding peoples.[18]

At the end of the Bar Kochba rebellion the Romans executed what became known as the **"ten martyrs"** [19] (including Akiva on the eve of the Day of Atonement) who had supported the rebellion. According to the rabbi's the reason that God punished them was not for the failed messianic rebellion but because their ancestors **had sold Joseph into Egypt**. The ten princes (crowns) of Israel had sold Joseph to Egypt (Gen 37.18-37). The punishment for kidnapping under the Law was death (Exod 21.16) and therefore ten rabbis where vicariously punished for the sins of their ancestors.[20] The pseudographic book of Jubilees[21] recounts how Jacob had been deceived on the tenth day of the seventh month (the Day of Atonement) by a garment dipped in goats' blood. The garment of many colours was associated in rabbinical writings with the high priestly garments.[22]

We note with interest that Rev 12 commences with Joseph's dream and that the enslavement of Joseph into the land of death (Egypt) by his ten brethren typifies the rejection of Christ (they envied that the Father loved him). Ironically, even Jewish self-justifying myth points to the real reason behind divine punishment as the ten crowns (ten princes of Israel) blamed a beast for their brother's demise and were now persecuting his offspring (Jewish Christians in Judea).

The false religious system

The beast which emerges from the sea (Sea-beast) is a proto-type of the Scarlet beast[23] ridden by **mystery Babylon** (controlled by a false religious system) shown at a later stage to John in the wilderness.

In the second century it was the Jews of Parthia and of Palestine (the ancient territories of Babylon) that transformed the Law into *causa sui* project, a rabbinical quagmire of tradition and self-righteous that offered false hope and ignored the will of God. As if that were not enough they elected to put their faith in a false messiah and attempted to resurrect temple worship.

Yahweh had removed the temple but instead of reflection and repentance they doubled down on iniquity. In fact, they concluded that they needed more of the same, more rigorous Law keeping, more tradition more perverse moulding of Scripture in their own image (the Babylonian Talmud) thereby making the Law of no consequence.

It did not occur to them (for they refused to consider) that these things happened because they rejected Jesus. They did not need or want a suffering messiah. Einstein once said that the definition of insanity is to constantly repeat the same actions expecting a different outcome. That is exactly what they did. They had learned nothing and tried to breathe life into dead temple worship (not recognising Jesus as the new temple) and therefore their attempt at **reinstituting temple worship was nothing more than erecting an idol to the beast** (their false Babylonian, false messiah, false Law keeping system).

Their revolt lasted 3½ years (42 months) **following the pattern of the first revolt** and once again their idol was removed. It is for this reason that the Apocalypse depicts the beast as the antichrist (note that the characteristics of the Sea-beast and Scarlet beast are merged despite them being separated in historical time):

Jesus	**Beast**
• Emerges from waters of Baptism	• Emerges from the sea
• Receives the holy spirit	• Given power to do great signs
• Tempted in the wilderness	• Beast and rider in the wilderness
• Lamb, as though it had been slain	• One of its heads slain to death
• Is, was, is to come	• Was, is not, shall ascend
• The world follows him (Jhn.12: 19)	• All the world wondered after him
• Worship me (Satan)	• Worship the beast and his image
• Satan promises world kingdoms	• Dragon (Satan) gave him his power
• Ministry 3½ years	• Exists a "short time" (42 months)

The temple had become nothing more than a self-serving idol. A resurrection of past glory with no recognition of the wrong they had done. God had destroyed the temple and given them a new one, Jesus Christ **being the express image of his person** (Heb 1.3). This they refused and made **their own image** (temple) and like Nebuchadnezzar forced everyone (including Jewish-Christians) to worship their messianic ideal.

It matters not whether Bar Kochba actually completed the building of a temple or whether he simply erected an altar and commenced sacrificial worship ---he produced coinage that depicted his star **elevated above the temple** and the intent if not the complete realization of temple (idol) worship was there. This was both an abomination and an insult to God. Like Babel they had built a tower to the very heavens challenging God himself. Like Nebuchadnezzar they had become bestial in their defiance and their hubris in building (to paraphrase) "Great Babylon for my glory". Like Adam they gasped at divinity, something Christ refused to do. Jesus answered Satan; "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Jesus refused the overtures of Satan. In 2 Thess.2.9 it is claimed that the coming of the lawless one will be by the activity of Satan with all power and signs and lying (pseudos) wonders.

The lie is that man is God – showing himself that he is God (v.4). This is the original sin of Genesis 3.5 The challenge did not go unanswered --- the audacity of their defiance shook the very host of heaven --- they had attempted to steal and wrest the divine plan for redemption, to provide their own temple and their own messiah (after all God had done for them).

This is why the struggle is depicted as **a cosmic battle** and until adamic nature is finally destroyed the same patterns (variations of them) **will continue to repeat.** This is also why Jesus warns his followers (in the Olivet prophecy) not to be deceived because the appearance of a victorious Jewish messiah was very seductive (even for the very elect), especially for second century Christians, who had never seen Jesus (the apostles had all passed away by then). Those who withstood the false messiah became "witnesses" (like their first century counterparts) and died for their testimony. Jerusalem was fully cast off and became a gentile city. Henceforth the gospel would be preached to the gentiles. Meanwhile, the Jews continued their rabbinic rebellion in Babylon which has lasted two thousand years to the present day. The Jews still refuse Jesus as the messiah. Nothing has been learned in the intervening two thousand years **therefore the pattern will repeat again** (a separate chapter will be devoted to this).

Babylon the Great (Rev 13.3)

> "And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast".

The beast is the archetypical Babylon. It is the glory of kingdoms (Isa 13: 19) it is the temporary dwelling place of God's people, who are encouraged to plant and build until God performs his good word (Jer. 29.5-10), it is full of graven images (Jer. 51.47) and vaunting pride (Isa 14.13, Dan 4.30). Its ultimate destiny is destruction (Rev 14.8) but not before God's people come out of her (Rev 18.4). This is a parody of the Lamb standing as though it had been slain (Rev 5. 6). The Lamb is the one that lives and was dead (1: 18) the beast also, "was and is not; and shall ascend out of the abyss" (Rev 17.8). One of the heads appeared to be fatally wounded but the mortal wound had healed. Which head was wounded? Here the cardinal number one can also be an ordinal number: the first head appeared to be fatally wounded. This is the Babylonian head of the beast. Whilst in verse three it is only the first head that is wounded, later this becomes a metaphor for the whole monster: "the first beast whose deadly wound was healed" (v.12) "the beast which had the wound by a sword and did live." (v.14) Babylon is the fatally wounded head whose mortal wound was healed:

Babylon in Jeremiah 51	**Babylon in Revelation**
o Roar like lions **(v.38)**	o Mouth like a lion **(13.2)**
o Drunk and rejoicing **(v.39)**	o Drunk and rejoicing **(17.6, 11.10)**
o Babylon covered by the sea **(v. 42)**	o Emerges from the sea **(13.1)**
o A sword upon Babylon **(50.35, 37)**	o Wounded by a sword **(13.14)**
o Astonishment at her destruction **(v.41)**	o Astonishment at her resurrection **(17.6)**
o A dwelling place for dragons **(v.37)**	o Lamb speaks like a dragon **(13.11)**
o Judgement on her graven images **(v.37)**	o Image of the beast **(13. 15)**

The whole world wondered after the beast because although it was once mortally wounded, now it appeared phoenix like from the ashes; "It shall be no more inhabited for ever; neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation" (Jer. 50.39). "The beast thou sawest was, is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit" (Rev 17.8). The whole world [24] wondered after the beast (Rev 13.3). Yet again we observe that although they are separated by historical time the beasts of Rev 13 and Rev 17 morph into a single entity --- they are the same, yet different.

The morphing of the beasts

Despite being separated by historical time the beasts (Dragon/Sea-beast/Scarlet beast) are all very similar and this causes exegetical confusion. The phases of the beast will be further analysed in Rev.17 but suffice to say that the battle is not with beasts (plural) but with "a beast" or "the beast" (singular) because it is depicted as a cosmic battle (more on this in Rev 17). The beast has different (but similar) "manifestations" throughout history which can be identified with particular historical peoples, kings, empires etc but we are reminded that they are the same spiritual materialization from the beginning of time until the end of time.

That "old Serpent" (Rev 12.9) who tempted Eve and persecuted the faithful seed and who was thrown "out of heaven" in the first century is consigned to the abyss (again) when Christ returns at the start of the millennium; "And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years" (Rev 20.2) and the ancient serpent is released from the abyss (yet again) at the end of the thousand years.

We have then a shape-shifting, reincarnated beast that deceives the world whenever it reappears (because it seems different every time), but it is actually the same beast because it is animated by the same spirit. We must therefore train ourselves in pattern recognition so that we can identify the repeat patterns (Won't Get Fooled Again).

War with the saints (Rev 13.7-8)

> "And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world".

In his commentary Peter Watkins draws parallels between Rev 11.7-9 and Rev 13.7,8[25] where similar terminology is employed:

Revelation 11	**Revelation 13**
• shall make war against them, and shall overcome them	• to make war with the saints, and to overcome them
• people and kindreds and tongues and nations	• kindreds, and tongues, and nations.
• that dwell upon the earth	• that dwell upon the earth

On the basis of parallel language Watkins argues for equating the witness of Rev 11 with the saints of Rev 13 but there is an important difference as the beast of Rev 11 emerges from the abyss and the beast in Rev 13 emerges from the Sea.

Although the abyss and the sea have overlapping semantic domains they are subtly different. The Greek for abyss or the bottomless pit is ἄβυσσος (abussos) and the Greek for sea is θάλασσα (thalassa). An examination of the terms throughout the Apocalypse produces the following (only relevant occurrences of sea are shown):

Rev	Abyss/Sea	Theme
9.1	key of the bottomless pit	given to fifth trumpet angel
9.2	he opened the bottomless pit	Smoke and locusts emerge
9.11	angel of the bottomless pit	Abaddon/Apollyon
11.7	beast ascends out of bottomless pit	Witnesses killed
13.1	sand of the sea a beast out of the sea	Sea-beast emerges
17.8	shall ascend out of the bottomless pit	The beast that was, and is not
20.1	having the key of the bottomless pit	Angel opens abyss
20.3	And cast him into the bottomless pit	Satan bound
20.13	And the sea gave up the dead	Resurrection and judgement
21.1	there was no more sea	The first mention of sea Gen 1.26[26]

The sea is employed in a universal sense to denote the Gentile nations in Rev 20.13 and in Rev 21.1 and is often contrasted in Revelation with the earth in order to distinguish national Israel from the Gentile nations. In Rev 13.1 it has a specific sense and is the **great sea** of Dan 7.2 from which the beasts emerge. The netBible comments; "The referent of ***the great sea*** is unclear. The common view that the expression refers to the Mediterranean Sea is conjectural." Daniel was in the city of Susa when he received his second vision which was 150 miles (240 km) north of the Persian Gulf in present-day Iranian Khuzistan. The opening to the Persian Gulf was described, but not given a name, in the Periplus of the Erythraean Sea, a 1st-century mariner's guide:

> "At the upper end of these Calaei islands is a range of mountains called Calon, and there follows not far beyond, the mouth of the Persian Gulf, where there is much diving for the pearl-mussel. To the left of the straits are great mountains called Asabon and to the right there rises in full view another round and high mountain called Semiramis; between them the passage across the strait is about six hundred stadia; beyond which **that very great and broad sea, the Persian Gulf**, reaches far into the interior. At the upper end of this gulf there is a market-town designated by law called Apologus, situated near Charaex Spasini and the River Euphrates." [27]

The beasts of Daniel are all centred on Babylon, even Alexander the Great died in Babylon before his kingdom split, by the first century the only independent kingdom that remained from these successive powers was Parthia, therefore, the "Great Sea" of Daniel and consequently the sea of Rev 13.1 is the Persian Gulf.

The beasts of Rev 17.8 and Rev 11.7 ascend from the abyss in contrast with the beast of Rev 13 that emerges from the sea. Note that the beast of Rev 11.7 is not identified e.g. it is not called "Scarlet" or "Red" and at this point in the story a first-time reader would be left wondering what empire the beast signified. Because Rev 11.7 is placed just before the seventh trump it is likely that the beast of 11.7 should be equated with the Scarlet beast. However, the fact that the beast in 11.7 is not differentiated introduces a deliberate ambiguity because we are dealing with a **repetitive pattern.** So, the type of response (persecution etc) that the saints receive in Rev 13 is similar to the response to the witnesses in Rev 11 and to the man child in Rev 12 (Great Red Dragon) and to the saints of Rev 17 (Scarlet Beast). They are different phases of the same beast, living in different historical time periods but repeating the same behaviours.

We are not permitted to forget that the monster acts only by divine permission, and that all he does is foreseen and provided for in the grand strategy of God. He is only allowed to attack the witnesses after they have finished their ministry –"shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them" (11.7). This verse alludes to Dan.7.21 and probably to the LXX Dan.7.8, "and he waged war against the saints"

In Dan.7.21, it says that the little horn, "made war with the holy ones and was prevailing over them." The extent of the monsters authority is over every tribe, people tongue and nation. The tribes of the earth are the Jews (see 1.7 R.V.) people tongue and nation are rendered in the singular (R.V.) – this is no doubt to remind us that, "the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined (R.V. purposed) to do." (Gen.11.6). Therefore, monster is building the tower of Babel, a temple that will be a place of worship for the Diaspora.

The False Messiah (Rev 13.11-12)

> "And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed".

As Ramsay pointed out, whatever comes from the sea is foreign, and whatever comes from the land is a native product. Peter Watkins comments: These words come straight after the description of the beast whose deadly wound is healed. From all the information given in Revelation 13, it can be seen that this second beast is not an independent political power that exists at the same time as the beast. Rather, it is a publicity agent for the first beast. It "causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed."[28] Lambs (ewe lambs and ram lambs) are young sheep.

Both ewes (the females) and rams may or may not have horns, depending on the breed of sheep. In this case the two horned lamb is a parody of Christ who also had a "wound" that was healed (Rev 5.6) but note the dualism of the symbols as the Christ-Lamb is also a Lion (but unlike the royal Babylonian lion). The Lamb is therefore a messianic symbol- **it represents Jesus Christ the Jewish messiah** *ipso facto* a lamb that speaks like a dragon (serpent) **is a false Jewish Messiah.** It cannot be anything else – <u>the symbolism will not allow it</u>. As previously discussed the dragon/serpent motif is the desire **to be like the Elohim.**

The fact that it is called a dragon purposely takes us back to the Great Red Dragon that **built the second temple and administered it** (the Herod's, Priests, Romans etc). This depicts the desire to build a temple (image of the beast) and the authority to do so was transferred from the Palestinian beast (Red Dragon) to the Sea-beast (Parthia/Babylon) emerging from the Persian Gulf to the Earth-beast (two horned Lamb) which represents the false messiah Bar Kochba coming out of the Earth (land of Israel) who supported the Sea-beast (and was in turn himself supported) in its desire for a temple and an independent Judea.

Note that the two-horned lamb (false messiah) is not wounded…it is the Sea-beast that at some time in the past had received a mortal wound. We would expect the Red Dragon to have the mortal wound which is why the dragon transfers power to the Sea-beast but it seems as if the dragon shares the wound with the Sea-beast. The head that was wounded (only one of them is wounded) seems to be the first head, or the "Babylonian" (Parthian) head. The explanation may lie in the fact that both Palestinian and Parthian Jewry saw the loss of the temple as both a religious and political threat.

The Jews of Parthia lived in autonomous satraps and practiced their religion unhindered but the fall of the temple was the thin end of the wedge as Trajan pursued a more aggressive policy towards Parthia. Not only had they lost the temple but they lost any chance of influence over Palestinian Jewry and this was regarded as an imminent threat. The temple was a religious and political rallying point for international Judaism, without such a focal point there was the danger of instability, drift and disruption of lucrative trade ties, moreover, Judea was not far from the borders of Parthia (Babylon).

It is no coincidence that this period saw Diaspora insurrections across the Roman Empire and we can but speculate that they were encouraged (if not supported) by Parthian Jews who felt threatened. So, both Palestinian and Parthian Jewry was mortally wounded by the loss of the temple --- but a plan was launched to restore the temple and free Israel from the Roman yoke --- the rebellion of the false messiah, Bar Kochba. Pharisees and Sadducees formed the "two horns"[29] acting as religious propagandists for the false messiah and one of these horns is regarded as an important founder of rabbinical Judaism, with Bar Kochba held up as a shining example of self reliance and freedom fighting by the current Zionist state. The "two horns" form the counterpart to the "two witnesses" that testify of the true messiah. Worship of the Earth-beast (false messiah) is therefore tantamount to worshiping the first beast – which is Babylon, the place of idol worship where the nation had been exiled some six hundred years previously, when their temple had also been removed because of disobedience.

Great Wonders (Rev 13.13-15)

> "And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by *the means of* those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed".

Jesus had previously warned the saints in the Olivet prophecy; "For there shall arise false Christ's and false prophets, and shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." (Mtt.24. 24; to seduce [like the serpent], if it were possible the very elect – Mk.13.22). There are two "wonders" or miracles in this section, namely calling down heavenly fire and causing the image to "speak" which is taken as proof of life. It will be demonstrated that the dual themes of heavenly fire and speaking are linked. Many commentaries understand the cult image as a reference to the imperial cult – the Caesars where worshipped as divinities – and pagan "cult images" were sometimes rigged with speaking tubes and moving parts so that they could issue oracles. However, it has already been established that the two horned lamb is a false Jewish messiah and not a Caesar, moreover, Jews were hardly going to be "deceived" by a talking statute

Matthew 7: 15-23	**Revelation 13**
• Beware of false prophets	• The false prophet
• In sheep's clothing	• Like a Lamb
• Inwardly ravening wolves	• Speaks like a serpent
• By their fruits ye shall know	• Makes an image of the beast.
• In thy name done wonders	• Doeth great signs and wonders
• I never knew you: depart	• Cast into lake of fire (19.20)

It is not as though the Jews had not received fair warning, as even Moses told them in Deuteronomy:

Deuteronomy 13	**Revelation 13**
o If there arise among thee a prophet	o Like a lamb but spoke as a dragon
o And give thee a sign or a wonder	o And he doeth great wonders
o Whereof he spake unto thee saying	o Saying to them that dwell on earth
o Let us go after other gods	o make an image to the beast
o And shall burn that city with fire	o and burn the city with fire **(17.17)**

For those willing to pursue the matter Rev 13 has **six** allusions/echoes to Isaiah 46 and **five** to Exodus 4.27-31. So, Jews familiar with Scripture would have understood the warning in Rev 13 and could not feign ignorance. Peter most certainly had Revelation 13 in mind when he wrote these words:[30]

2 Peter 2. 1-3	**Revelation 13**
▪ False prophets among the people	▪ Serpent-Lamb (false prophet)
▪ Who, with feigned words	▪ saying … make an image
▪ make merchandise of you	▪ no buying etc without the mark

In the OT the motif of "fire from heaven" is linked with consuming a sacrifice <u>on the altar of burnt offering</u>. This happened at **the dedication of Solomon's temple** but also with the **altar built on Mt Carmel** where Elijah challenged the prophets of Baal. Both these occasions are important to understanding these verses. In the Elijah account the challenge is clarified with the words; "the God who **<u>answers</u>**[31] by fire, he is God" (1 Kings 18.24). The "god" Baal could not meet the challenge; "**there was no <u>voice</u>, and no one answered**" (v.26). In this account fire from heaven **<u>is equated with the voice</u>**[32] of the God/god.

Therefore fire from heaven is equivalent to <u>God speaking</u>. It is noteworthy that one of the witnesses is modelled on Elijah thus the false messiah and his pseudo witnesses copy the Elijah miracle. The "wonder" is performed in order to deceive people that the image of the beast has life.

At the dedication of Solomon's temple the sacrifice on the altar of burnt offering was consumed by fire from heaven. The second book of Maccabees is informative as it mentions the "**the feast of the fire** given when Nehemiah, who built the temple and the altar, offered sacrifices". Maccabees is an account of the Hasmonean revolt against the desecration of the temple by Antiochus Epiphanes and how the Maccabees consequently **cleansed and rededicated the temple**. Although Maccabees gives a largely historical account of the independence struggle under the priestly dynasty much of the writing is tendentious i.e., for propaganda purposes etc. It is for example clear that Nehemiah did not build the temple.[33] This is of course a legendary story in which Nehemiah is depicted as using a petroleum product (the LXE has naphtha).[34] The New Oxford Annotated Bible has the following summary under Maccabees 1-2:

> 1.10—2.18: Another letter to the Jews of Egypt. This letter focuses on the history of the fire on the altar of the Temple of Jerusalem, working backward from Nehemiah through Jeremiah to Solomon. It claims that the fire that descended from heaven in the days of Solomon (2.10; 2 Chr 7.3) was hidden by pious priests at the time of the destruction of the First Temple (1.19). At the time of the restoration, it was found by Nehemiah, after a metamorphosis into a viscous and combustible liquid (1.20-36). He used some of it to rekindle the fire on the altar of the Second Temple, while the rest of it was preserved in rocks (1.31—32), from which Judas would eventually extract it when rededicating the Temple (10.3). So the restored Temple still had the original fire that descended from heaven. Thus, this letter constitutes an extended argument for the legitimacy of the Second Temple by connecting Nehemiah's restoration and Judas's rededication to Solomon's original dedication.[35]

The story is obviously mythical and designed to legitimize the rededication of the temple by the Maccabees. The only place where petroleum products are easily available is Mesopotamia and we are in fact told in Gen 11.3 that bitumen or asphalt was used as mortar **when building the tower of Babel.** Volatile petroleum compounds are found on the surface (or when digging wells) in the regions of Babylon and the Maccabees probably ignited the altar in a spectacular event using such volatile organics. The story is then a justification of how the priests got hold of "divine fire", it had been kept continually burning since the time of Nehemiah (presumably Nehemiah kept the flame alive in Persia) and then handed down the priestly line to the Maccabees or, as the passage states it was preserved <u>in rocks</u> and the secret of how to use the "fire" was passed on to the priests.

We can speculate that Bar Kochba did something similar --- perhaps his minions even soaked the altar in water like Elijah and then it was ignited – instantly exploding. We can imagine Bar Kochba claiming that he had been handed the "fire from heaven" that was preserved since the time of the Maccabees (which in turn had been kept constantly burning like the Olympic flame since Jeremiah's time or preserved in rocks?). This was then a sign guaranteeing legitimacy of the false messiah's project to rebuild the temple. The "fire from heaven" (really a petrol bomb) is equated with the image (idol) "speaking" because that is how it was depicted in Elijah's time.

The "image" now has life or legitimacy – the project to rebuild the temple has the divine blessing. One cannot miss the analogy between Elijah and the prophets of Baal –the false prophets have their answer as Baal (the image/idol) now "speaks" through his pseudo-miracle of divine fire, thus granting his blessing on the building of a new temple. Of course, this is nothing like Elijah's miracle which was probably caused by a small meteorite impacting the altar.

Nevertheless, for those willing to be deceived the flaming/exploding altar must have seemed like spectacular confirmation from their new "messiah" and coupled with him thrashing the Roman Legions and declaring the "freedom and redemption" of Jerusalem it must have seemed like the kingdom had arrived.

But the faithful, who had been warned by the Apocalypse, were not deceived. This was in fact a Priestly rebellion as they were keen to restore their lucrative positions of power and this is reflected by the intertextual links with the wicked sons of the high priest Eli --:

1 Samuel	Rev 13 & 2 Thess. 2
Sons of Belial. [sons of wickedness] **(2.12)**	Then shall that wicked be revealed. **(2 Thess.2.8)**
They abhorred the offering of the Lord. **(2.17)**	Who believed not the truth **(2 Thess.2.12)**
Hophni –meaning: fighter, pugilist (took what belonged to God by violence)	Who is able to make war with him? **(13.4)**
Phineas – meaning: mouth of a serpent	That they should believe a lie **(2 Thess.2.11)** Spake as a serpent **(13. 11)**
Who shall deliver us out of the hand of these mighty gods? **(4.8)**	Who is able to make war with him? **(13.4)**
For the iniquity which he knoweth and he restrained them not. **(3. 13)**	That which restraineth to the end….there is one that restraineth now. **(2 Thess. 2. 6,7)**
Eli sat upon a seat by a post of the temple of the Lord. **(1.9)**	Sitteth in the temple of God. **(2 Thess.2. 4)**
Talk no more so exceeding proudly: Let not arrogancy come out of your mouth. **(2.3)**	Who opposeth and exalteth himself. **(2 Thess.2.4)** A mouth speaking great things. **(13.5)**
The Lord killeth, and maketh alive. **(2.6)**	Death stroke was healed. **(13.13)**

Eli and his sons represented a corrupt priesthood. Eli suffered the fate of a broken neck, (and his sons were killed) this was the consequence dictated by the law for an unredeemed ass. (Ex.34. 20), which was a symbol of royalty. Israel was meant to be a royal-priesthood. The sons of Eli "abhorred the offering of the Lord" in the same manner as Jews who believed not the truth (covenants of promise concerning the messiah Jesus).

They were rogue priests, using violence to take the choice parts of the sacrifices and fornicating with the women who serviced the tabernacle. They used the Ark of the Covenant for their own ends, as an instrument of war, thus turning the sacred relic into an idol (image) in the same manner as the golden calf was a corruption of the living creatures (cherubim) causing Paul in Rom 1.25 to remark: "Who changed the truth of God (covenants) into a lie (idol-image), and worshipped and served the creature (calf cherubim) more than the Creator". It is notable that the high priest Aaron participated in this apostasy (probably because he was afraid) and offered the lame excuse that he just threw some stuff into the fire and lo and behold the calf suddenly appeared (LOL). The reason for the apostasy was Moses' **delay in coming** down from the Mount – they thought he was dead and couldn't even wait for forty days. Thus we have established that whenever Israel apostatizes they do so by **misappropriating temple iconography.**

Blasphemy (13.6)

> "And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven".

The mention of the "tabernacle" rather than the temple is not accidental (the author of Hebrews also substitutes the temple for the tabernacle). The divine dwelling place is not a permanent "temple" made with hands but rather a temporary dwelling place. The monster blasphemes Gods name, and his tabernacle, and those that dwell in heaven. (A.V.) However, the best MSS omit 'and' and the Chester Beatly papyrus reads "his dwelling in heaven" the R.V. renders 'and' as 'even'. One of the fundamental rules of textual criticism is that the hardest reading is always best (translators have a penchant for simplifying or interpreting a reading). The most probable reading is then: Gods name, and his tabernacle (***skênê***), them that dwell (***skênoo***) in heaven.

In Rev.21: 3 ***skênê*** is used almost as the equivalent of the Hebrew ***shekinah***, to denote God's tabernacling presence, and we are told that with the descent of the new Jerusalem this presence is at last among men. The tabernacle was a temporary dwelling place – the word ***skênê*** is used in the Septuagint for the tabernacle in the wilderness. The tabernacle could be dismantled and erected, it signified in the first instance the indwelling of the ***shekinah*** in mortal flesh.[36]

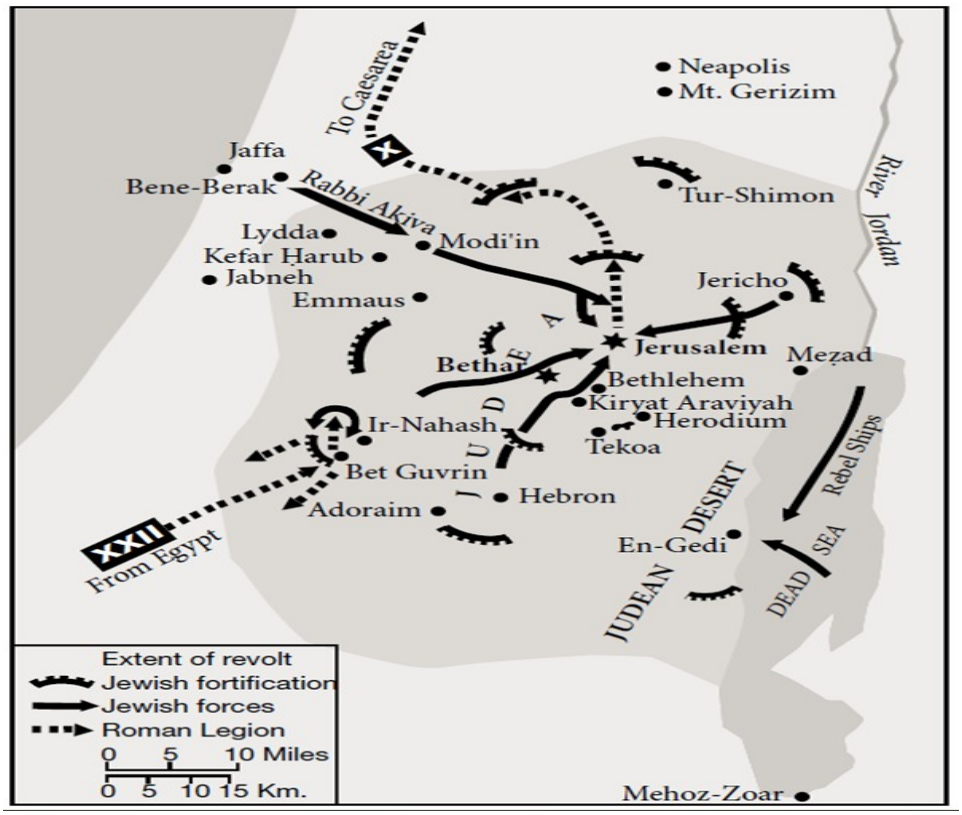
In other words, the false messiah Bar Kochba and his newly appointed priests were emboldened by their victory over Rome and their plans to re-establish a temple. They saw this as the vindication of rabbinical Judaism over Christianity. They poked fun at the "Christian God" in the same way as Elijah did to the prophets of Baal;

> **1 Kings 18:27** And it came to pass at noon, that Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry aloud: for he *is* a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, *or* peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked.

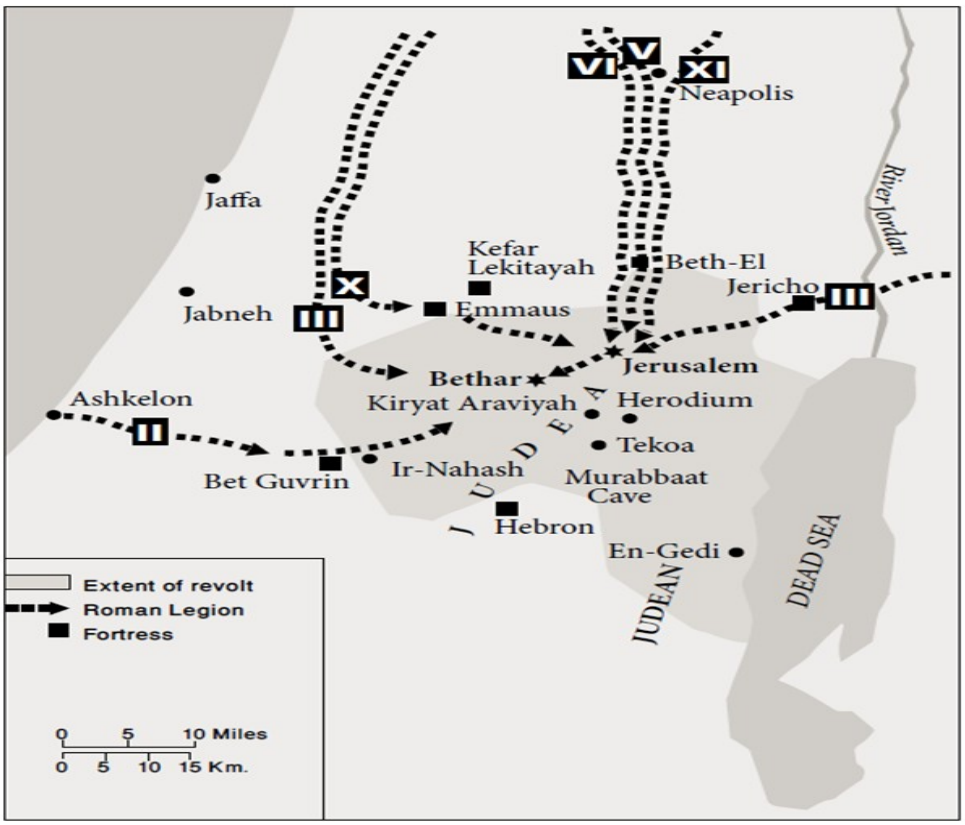
We can imagine the mocking. Where is your "Christ" that predicted the fall of the temple? Perhaps, he is asleep? Where is his supposed kingdom? We have a temple now (or are about to build one) look we even have God's blessing in the form of "divine fire". We will weed out the heretics now that Rome and your God/Christ can no longer protect you. You "law breakers" will all be killed because you refuse to worship at the temple of God's chosen one. You have been proven to be false prophets of Baal and we will kill all of you. And so began a pogrom against (predominantly) Jewish-Christians in the land of Judea.

Extent of the Bar Kochba Revolt

Map 1. (below) Extent of the Bar Kokhba revolt in its first year, 132 C.E. After Y. Aharoni, Carta's Atlas of the Bible, Heb. ed., 1966.



Map 2. (below) Extent of the Bar Kokhba revolt in its third and fourth years. After Y. Aharoni, Carta's Atlas of the Bible, Heb. ed., 1966



The Book of life (Rev 13.8-9)

> "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. If any man have an ear, let him hear."

Abraham was the founder of the "Jewish world" (by faith in the covenant promises made by God): "And Abraham, rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad" (John 8.56). Abraham "saw" the slain lamb on Mt. Moriah – on the mountain of the Lord it (the Lamb)[37] shall be seen (Gen.22: 14). From the foundation of the "Jewish world" the Lamb was slain (in type) and Abraham the father of the Jews "saw" it. Once again it is the Jewish world that is referenced here as the New Testament church is but a "branch" in a tree that has roots in the Abrahamic covenants. The "earth" dwellers are therefore Jews. All believers (Jews and Gentiles) are therefore written in the Lamb's book from the foundation of the (Jewish) world. This interpretation finds support from 17.8 which is a doublet:

Rev 13. 8	**Rev 17. 8**
whose name was not written	whose name was not written
in the book of life	in the book of life
of the Lamb slaughtered	----
from the foundation of the world	from the foundation of the world

"If any man have an ear, let him hear". In each of the seven letters to the churches these words accompanied the promise to the conqueror. By their solemn repetition here at the heart of his book John indicates that he is turning once again to give the church its marching orders. If God allows the monster to wage war on his people and conquer them, what must Gods people do? They must allow themselves to be conquered as their Lord has done, so that like their Lord they may win a victory not of this world.

Killing with the sword (Rev 13.10)

> KJV He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.
>
> NIB If anyone is to go into captivity, into captivity he will go. If anyone is to be killed with the sword, with the sword he will be killed. This calls for patient endurance and faithfulness on the part of the saints.

The KJV and NIB translations give a different sense – whereas the KJV reads the Greek as if the saints are actively killing with the sword, the NIB understands the saints objectively, "to be killed with the sword". This verse is based on an allusion to LXX Jer.15: 2; "Those who are destined for pestilence, to pestilence, those who are destined for the sword to the sword; those who are destined for famine to famine; those who are destined for captivity, to captivity."(See also LXX Jer.50: 11 and M.T. Jer.43: 11). The Apocalypse is adapting Jeremiah's prophetic warning against Jerusalem (of impending Babylonian invasion) towards the saints (the New Jerusalem).

A parallel can be found in the words of Jesus, spoken to Peter at Gethsemane: "All who take the sword, shall perish by the sword." (Mtt.26: 52). Whether the KJV or the NIB reading is preferred, the meaning is clear (despite the textual ambiguity), namely, those who take up arms in support of Bar Kochba will perish and those saints who are destined to be killed by the sword (due to persecution) will be killed. There will be no immediate intervention or deliverance and this will require patient endurance on the part of the saints. Hebrews comments[38] "For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds" (Heb 12.3).

And his number is 666

Many commentators regard the 666 as a reference to Nero and in this they are partially correct as he typified the persecuting aspect of the beast pre-70. He did not dream up the persecution of an insignificant sect known as "Christians" on his own but was influenced by his mistress Poppæa who was a Jewish convert. The entry by Kohler *et al* in the Jewish Encyclopedia reads:

> "Mistress and, after 62 C.E., second wife of the emperor Nero; died 65. She had a certain predilection for Judaism, and is characterized by Josephus ("Ant." xx. 8, § 11; "Vita," § 3) as θεοσεβής ("religious"). Some Jews, such as the actor Alityros, were well received at court, and Poppæa was always ready to second Jewish petitions before the emperor. In 64 Josephus went to Rome to obtain the liberation of some priests related to him who had been taken captive to that city for some minor offense. With the help of Alityros, Josephus succeeded in gaining the intercession of the empress, and returned home with his friends, bearing rich gifts with him.
>
> When King Agrippa added a tower to the ancient palace of the Hasmoneans, at Jerusalem, that he might overlook the city and the Temple and watch the ceremonial in the sanctuary, the priests cut off his view by a high wall. He then appealed to the procurator Festus, but a Jewish delegation sent to Rome succeeded through Poppæa's intercession in having the case decided in favor of the priests. The last procurator, Gessius Florus (64-66), owed his appointment to the empress, who was a friend of his wife Cleopatra"[39].

It is quite plausible that Poppæa suggested the Christians as a scapegoat to Nero at the instigation of Jewish priests that she come into contact with. It is improbable that Nero would have stumbled on the idea without prompting and it was a way to curry favour with his mistress/wife and with the Jews. Whether it is true or legendary, the Talmud relates that one of Kochba's supporters was related to Nero and it hardly seems to the benefit of a Rabbi to allow such rumours to circulate unless they contained a grain of truth. Wikipedia states, "The Talmud adds that the sage Reb Meir Baal HaNess, Rabbi Meir or Rabbi Meir Baal HaNes (Rabbi Meir the miracle maker) was a Jewish sage who lived in the time of the Mishna a prominent supporter of the Bar Kokhba rebellion against Roman rule. He was considered one of the greatest of the Tannaim of the third generation (139-163). According to the Talmud, his father was a descendant of the Roman Emperor Nero who had converted to Judaism. His wife Bruriah is one of the few women cited in the Gemara. He is the third most frequently mentioned sage in the Mishnah".[40]

However, it has been demonstrated that the epithet **of Bar Kochba is also 666** and he is the candidate best suited (post 70 CE) to typify the beast. The imprint of Babylon is indisputable in the book of Revelation. The Chaldean Empire was called Leb – kamai (Jer.51.1)[41] which means the heart of them that rise up against me – it was from Babylon that Adonikam (Lord of the uprising or enemy) returned from captivity with his 666 children. (Ezra 2.13)[42]

Once again this strongly suggests that we are looking for a Jewish fulfilment of this passage – the rebellious children have returned from Babylon to their homeland, but in fact they never really left. We have already encountered 666 in relation to Solomon's kingdom, which became a travesty of the real thing. It is a number that recurs in scripture and it signifies open rebellion against God. Goliath was 6 cubits and a span. His spear head weighed 600 shekels of iron. He had six pieces of armour. Nebuchadnezzar's image was 60 x 6 cubits. It was worshipped when 6 instruments were heard. The numerical value of all the words describing the image in Daniel 3 is 4662 (7 x 666). The number 666 is the sum of all numbers from 1 to 36. The number 36 is the square of 6. The number 6 is itself a triangular number.

1
2 3
4 5 6

This triangle has three numbers on each side, 666 is also triangular with 36 numbers on each of the three sides. This suggests the unholy trinity of the beast, the false prophet and the image worshipers. (19: 20)

It is the second beast, the lamb with two horns that forces everyone to receive the mark of the first beast. Receiving the mark should be seen as metaphorically erecting an image to the first beast. The *all* is socially comprehensive and describes every strata of society. They are placed under economic bondage. The Greek word for beast (***therion***) when **transliterated** into the Hebrew has the numerical value 666. (**t** = 400; **r** = 200; **y** = 10; **w** = 6; **n** = 50) There are ambiguities in the original text which do not make matters easier; **a man** in verse sixteen could be rendered simply "man", for there is no indefinite article in the Greek. This latter is the translation adopted by the NIV (cf. RSV). If this is correct then it rules out all those interpretations which explain 666 as signifying the name of one particular individual.

In favour of the NIV rendering is the fact that "man" is the Greek ***anthropos***, which usually has the generic sense of mankind. If it had a single male person in mind then we would expect ***aner***. Nevertheless, first century Christians saw **Nero** as the **personification** of the beast and second century Christians saw **Bar Kochba** as the personification of the beast.

Bible students are aware that 7 represents completeness, that 8 represents a new beginning, for Christ was raised on the first day of the new week – 6 is therefore the number of man in a generic sense, for he was made on the sixth day. In contrast with the mark of the beast, we have the 144,000 who bare "his name and his Fathers' name on their foreheads." The name of the Lamb is Jesus, meaning Yahweh saves. It therefore also includes the name of the Father. In Greek Jesus is ***Iesous*** - which gives the numerical value of **888**. The triple six of the beast's name is yet a further example of anti-Christian parody, this time on the name of Jesus which is triple eight. The "mark" put upon the worshipers was discussed in the trumpet section and the "buying and selling" will be further elaborated in Rev 18.

Conclusion

Strong evidence has been presented to see a realization of Rev 13 in the events of the Bar Kochba rebellion and the attempt to restore temple worship. This chapter is about **a false Jewish messiah and a false temple** (image of the beast). However, one should not regard this as "past history" an issue that has been fulfilled and relegated to the dust bin of history. It establishes an important pattern – that is constantly repeated – and elements of this beast reappear in the Scarlet beast right at the end.

End Notes Chapter 13 Pages 264-292

[1] Our comparison table also has allusions to Rev 17.5 and Rev 18.10 demonstrating that the Scarlet Beast of Rev 17 is in many ways similar to the Sea-beast of Rev 13. So not only is the generic "beast" a composite from Daniel it is also a supra-historical **repeat pattern** transcending space-time.

[2] See Rev 17, p.364 **Access here**

[3] "It is obviously intended that the reader identifies the fourth beast with the metallic image-empires of chapter 2, which is why the hybrid monster has metallic appendages – but the correlation is deliberately unspecific, precluding complete identification with either one or the other empire of chapter 2 but containing elements of both. Therefore the brass (Greek) empire of chapter 2 includes the split into four (Greek) empires in chapter 7 (Leopard with four heads) and chapter 8 (Goat with four horns) and subsequently focuses attention on the Syrian Greek empire (fourth beast) and the Antiochene protagonist (Little horn) of chapter 7 and 8". See P. Wyns, *God is Judge: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, (Biblaridion Media, 2011),63 **Access here**

[4] See, *God is Judge*, The Insanity of the King, pp., 88-107 **Access here**

[5] These provinces frequently exchanged hands between Parthia and Rome.

[6] The establishment date of the Exilarchate is difficult to ascertain, Neusner (and others) present good historical arguments for placing it in the reign of Vologases I of Parthia 51-78 CE; "These are reasons, therefore, for Parthian efforts to establish a Jewish ethnarch. The form of such an ethnarchy was determined by Parthian political institutions: Parthia was a highly feudalized state, with many kinds of authorities owing fealty to the throne. For the Jews, likewise, a feudal ruler was required, one who would hold office by the grace of the shahanshah to rule over carefully delineated areas or groups. We have no evidence on the basis of which to date the institution of the exilarchate. It is likely to have begun during Vologases' reorganization of the empire. By the first third of the second century, at the latest, such a Jewish local self-government did exist". Jacob Neusner, A History of the Jews in Babylonia, Part 1: The Parthian Period, (Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2008),60-61

[7] The Exilarchs, professed scions of the biblical Davidic royal line, were leaders of the Jews of Babylonia in antiquity. They were said to be powerful political figures and to lead a decadent lifestyle. Their princely trappings and high-handed manner were legend. They were reported to be completely assimilated into Persian culture. Geoffrey Herman examines the evidence, culled mainly from the Talmudic and Geonic literature, subjecting the institution of the Exilarchate to literary-historical and source-critical analysis. In addition, Herman innovatively utilizes comparative sources from the fields of Iranian studies and Persian Christianity to find the truth underlying the accounts of the historical Exilarchs. Herman writes, "Furthermore, wearing a special crown, the right to use a golden bed/couch, and wearing a special belt, all mentioned with respect to the Exilarchaic, served as distinctive emblems for nobles even in the Parthian era. Armed with these visible symbols of authority, the Exilarchs would appear well equipped to exercise their authority over the Jews of Babylonia". Geoffrey Herman, A Prince Without a Kingdom: The Exilarch in the Sasanian Era (Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 217

[8] King of Kings (and sometimes also Lord of Lords) was a title employed by the Arsacid Persian dynasty e.g. Vologases I: King of Kings, Euergetes, Dikaios, Epiphanes, Philhellen, The Lord. The Greek titular epithets carry the following meanings: **Euergetes** = the Benefactor (i.e., doing good deeds), **Dikaios** = righteous or just, **Epiphanes** = God Manifest, **Philhellene** =the admirer of Greeks and everything Greek

[9] Rev 17.4 and 19.9 hints that the beast of Rev 13 is Persia/Babylon, otherwise Christ would have adopted a Roman epithet: "And he hath on *his* vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS". Expounding on Rev 17.4 Peter Watkins notes; "This means that ten kings ask the beast to be king over them. Because they are themselves kings, they virtually invite the beast to be King of Kings. Hence the comment: The Lamb shall overcome them: for he [not the beast] is Lord of Lords and King of Kings." Peter Watkins, Exploring the Apocalypse and the Future: An Urgent Message for All Who Await the Lord's Return, (Publisher: John Watkins, 1980), 64 Note: this does not mean that the sea-beast is the same as the scarlet beast but they do share similar characteristics.

[10] Rome was a republic until about 27 BCE. Modern historians conventionally regard Augustus as the first Emperor whereas Julius Caesar is considered the last dictator of the Roman Republic, a view having its origins in the Roman writers Plutarch, Tacitus and Cassius Dio. However, the majority of Roman writers, including Josephus, Pliny the Younger, Suetonius and Appian, as well as most of the ordinary people of the Empire, thought of Julius Caesar as the first Emperor. Titular epithets carry the following meanings: **Augustus** = majestic, or, the increaser, or venerable, **Caesar** = derived from the cognomen of Julius Caesar, **imperator** = commander (from which Emperor), **Princeps** = first in time or order; the first, foremost, **Pontifex Maximus** = literally, greatest pontiff or, greatest bridge-builder (i.e., high priest). **Roman emperor**, (2017, April 19). In Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia., from **Access here** Retrieved 04:22, April 22, 2017.

[11] Jacob Neusner states; "We have already noted the conversion of the royal family of Adiabene to Judaism. We may usefully consider the matter at greater length. Adiabene occupied part of the territories of ancient Assyria; when Trajan established the province of Assyria, he included Adiabene in it. Nisibis, which was placed under Adiabenian rule by Artabanus, contained a Jewish population, as we have already noted, and was a center for the collection of Temple funds from the surrounding area. A Temple official, Judah b. Bathyra, lived there. The neighbouring lands,

particularly Armenia, also had Jewish populations. In the first century, Armenia was ruled by a Jewish dynasty **descended from Herod**, as were Chaleis, Cappadocia, Iturea, and Abilene. Further to the south, in Babylonia, large numbers of Jews lived, and at the time of the conversion of the nobility of Adiabene, they maintained an autonomous state under Anileus and Asineus". *Ibid*, Neusner, p., 61-62

[12] Jacob Neusner says, "While Parthia did not openly intervene in the conflict the government did not prevent Adiabenian Jews from participating in the revolution, and it is entirely probable that though prevented by treaty from intervening themselves, the Parthian had no objection whatever to the assistance rendered by their satrapy...[p.63]. Thus Palestinian Jewish zealots and Parthia shared a similar purpose: the exclusion of Rome from Near Eastern and Middle Eastern affairs" [p.76]. Neusner, *Op., cit*

[13] Alexander Zephyr notes [p.79], "We have already explained elsewhere that 24,000 students of R. Akiva did not perish as a result of a mysterious plague named *askera*". Alexander Zephyr produces a (**recommended**) scathing assessment of R. Akiva. Zephyr has the courage to present the authentic story of R. Akiva, Zephyr covers the legendary figure's involvement in the Jewish-Roman war as well as his dramatic and mistaken announcement of Bar Kokhba as the God-chosen Messiah. Alexander Zephyr, Rabbi Akiva, Bar Kochba Revolt, and the Ten Tribes of Israel, (iUniverse, 2013) Chapter 1-5 of his book can be found online [accessed April 2017] @ **Access here**

[14] See Neusner, (partial citation of footnote 1 page 62): On the remnants of the Ten Tribes of Northern Israel in the Khabur area, see above, p. 13-14 [author: referencing Dilleman? *Op., cit.*]. See also Abraham Ben-Yaakov, *Jewish Communities of Kurdistan* [in Hebrew] (Jerusalem 1961) pp. 11-13. Kurdish Jews believe themselves descended from the Ten Tribes. See also J. Marquardt, *Osteuropäishe und Ostasiatische Streifzüge*, 1903, p. 228f, and Pigulevskaja, *Villes*, pp. 52-7, 64-78, 94, 113-115, etc. Besides the Neusner footnote see also: Tobit (which is part of the Apocrypha) that suggests that there were people from the tribe of Naphtali living in Rhages (Rey, Iran) and Ecbatana (Hamedan) at the time of the Assyrians (Book of Tobit 6:12) and also Josephus Flavius, (wrote in the 80s CE), who recorded: "The Ten Tribes are beyond the Euphrates until this day, and are an immense multitude whose numbers cannot be estimated" (*Antiq.*, 11, 5.2).

[15] **Assyrian captivity.** (2017, January 9). In Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Retrieved 03:53, April 21, 2017, from **Access here**

[16] Akiva's statement was contrary to the rabbinical opinion of his day (and of later Eras) and was possibly provoked by those of Ephramite descent refusing his call to arms.

[17] **Tribe of Ephraim.** (2017, January 26). In Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Retrieved 03:49, April 21, 2017, from **Access here**

[18] Gene Expression, Razib Khan, The Assyrians and Jews: 3,000 years of common history, (2011), [accessed April 2017] **Access here**

[19] **MARTYRS, THE TEN**: By Isidore Singer, Isaac Broydé , Jewish Encyclopedia (1906), [Accessed April 2017] **Access here**

[20] Commenting on the story of Rabbi Ishmael learning about the necessity for the martyrdom Knust *et al* says; "The narrative makes absolutely clear that the spilling of the martyr's blood will affect atonement for the blood-guilt of the Jewish people" [p. 272] *and*, "Israel's need for communal atonement on Yom Kippur entered rabbinic martyrology from early Jewish sources of the Second Temple period. The clearest statement of this etiology for the holiday is found in the second century text Jubilees (34:12-19)".[p. 271] Jennifer Wright Knust, Zsuzsanna Varhelyi, *Ancient Mediterranean Sacrifice*,(Oxford University Press, 2011)

[21] For the translated text of Jubilees See; *From The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament*, (R.H. Charles Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913) [Accessed April 2017] **Access here**

[22] Ra'anan S. Boustan examines the priestly aspect of Joseph's many coloured coat and atonement connections in the rabbinic writings. See, Ra'anan S. Boustan, *From Martyr to Mystic: Rabbinic Martyrology and the Making of Merkavah Mysticism*, (Mohr Siebeck, 2005),88-90

[23] Although the Sea-beast is similar to the Scarlet-beast they are not the same animal.

[24]The three terms that Revelation uses are: οἰκουμένη (oikoumene) civilized world (i.e., Greek speaking; Rev 3.10, 12.9, 16.4): γῆ (ge) solid earth or soil often as contrast with the sea (82 times), and κόσμος, (kosmos), world as in Jewish World (Rev.11.15, 13.8, 17.8). The Greek of Rev 13.3 is γῆ (ge), or earth; John uses a similar phraseology in his gospel using κόσμος: The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? Behold, the world (κόσμος) is gone after him."(John 12.19) κόσμος is often not meant universally as Johannine idiom for the Jewish world; (1)Show thyself to the world (John 7.4) jeered his brothers; (2) This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men (Jews) loved darkness rather than light (John 3.9); (3) See also 1: 29; 8: 26; 15: 19; 17: 14.

[25] Peter Watkins, Exploring the Apocalypse and the future,(1980),70-71

[26] The LXX Greek of sea in Gen 26.1 is θαλάσσης the genitive feminine singular form of the noun.

[27] Periplus of the Erythraean Sea, Chapter 35

[28] Watkins, Exploring the Apocalypse, p., 60

[29] Prominent supporters were Rabbi Akiva and Rabbi Eliezer ben Shamua (priestly descent) representing the Pharisees and Sadducees. Rabbi Akiva is highly regarded in rabbinical Judaism despite declaring that Bar Kochba was the awaited messiah and the absolute disaster that resulted because of his support.

[30] 2 Timothy 3 also alludes to Rev 13 there are some **sixteen allusions** to Rev 13 –see if you can find them. Remember the "parents" are Abraham, Isaac etc. Who is the "silly woman" that is led captive?

[31] עָנָה to answer, respond, testify, speak, shout 1a) (Qal) 1a1) to answer, respond to 1a2) to testify, respond as a witness and in LXX Greek: ἀποκρίνομαι answer, reply; respond.

[32] קוֹל or קֹל 1) voice, sound, noise and in LXX Greek: φωνή, voice; sound, note; noise, roar; outcry, cry; language, utterance.

[33] Judas [Maccabee] is depicted as the "successor" to Nehemiah, who, it was argued, had restored the original fire upon the rebuilt Jerusalem altar and founded a library housing the sacred books." Bergren notes; "Namely, the letter [2 Maccabees] exhorts the Egyptian Jews to observe the aforementioned "festival of fire given when Nehemiah, who built the Temple and the altar, offered sacrifices" (1:18) and goes on to identify Nehemiah as the one who dedicated the altar of the Second Temple (1:19-36). This is, of course, in obvious contradiction to other accounts of the origins of the Second Temple, which credit Zerubbabel and Jeshua, or Sheshbazzar, with its building and dedication. Furthermore, the elaborate story of how Nehemiah obtained hidden sacred petroleum and initiated the cultus is unparalleled in other early sources. The question is, where did all of this material come from?" After rejecting the later-known practice of Jewish exegetes to identify Nehemiah with Zerubbabel (see b. Sanh. 38a), Bergen offers two reasons for the anomaly (1); to associate Judas Maccabaeus with Nehemiah (2); to legitimize the Second Temple which unlike the first had not been visited with divine fire (cf. 2 Chr 7:1-3; Lev 9:24). Of course this would also help with the introduction of a "new feast" (Hanukkah) in order to rededicate the temple. The letter is then predominately pro-Judas, Hasmonean propaganda. Michael E. Stone, Theodore A. Bergren, Figures Outside the Bible,(Trinity Press International, USA,1998), 357.

[34] LXE 2 Maccabees 1.36 Nehemiah and his associates called this "nephthar," which means purification, but by most people it is called naphtha.

[35] Michael D. Coogan, Marc Z. Brettler, Carol Newsom, The New Oxford Annotated Bible with Apocrypha: New Revised Standard Version, (Oxford University Press),2010,1601

[36] Hebrews makes a distinction between the first tabernacle (Grk., ***protos skênê***– Heb.9.3,7) and the second tabernacle (Grk., ***deuteros skênê*** – Heb.9.6). The first tabernacle is the outer court (Hebw., ***hêkAl***) and the second tabernacle is the most holy place (Hebw., ***dêbir***). This probably explains the choice of phrase to John's Semitic mind (even though he wrote in Greek):"And the word [Grk., logos] (Hebw., ***dâbâr***) was made flesh and tabernacled [Grk., ***skênê***] (Hebw., ***debir***) amongst us and we beheld his glory [Grk., ***doxa***] (Hebw., ***shekinah***), the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1.14)

[37] The "lamb" in Abraham's statement is שֶׂה (she), which means sheep, goat, lamb, etc. Not specifically a baby sheep. The Septuagint at that place has πρόβατον (provaton) - a sheep. About the animal in the thicket, Hebrew says אַיִל (ʾayil) - from a root meaning to twist, indicating by the twisted horns a male sheep. Septuagint has κριὸν (krion), which means specifically ram. "Lamb" might not be the best translation, though it is very common at that point.

[38] Hebrews is specifically commenting on this verse because the author had a copy of the Apocalypse. See also Heb 12.1 and the digression **Dating matters**

[39] POPPÆA SABINA: Kaufmann Kohler, Eduard Neumann, Jewish Encyclopedia, (1906), [Accessed May 2017] **Access here**

[40] Nero. (2017, May 10). In Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Retrieved 03:03, May 11, 2017, from **Access here**

[41] Leb – kamai is an artificial name (like Sheshach), which when the consonants are exchanged according to the system called Athbash, yields KSDIM, that is, Chaldeans. Sheshach is a cyper for Babel. The letters of the alphabet were numbered both in their regular order (A=1….T=22) and in reverse order (A=22….T=1). B is the 2nd letter of the alphabet and S or Sh the 2nd from the end in reverse order. The B of Babel becomes then Sh and so forth. (Hebrew has no vowels) Sheshak suggests a wordplay on the Hebrew root shakak – to sink or bow down, implying the humiliation and punishment of Babel.

[42] The parallel passage in Neh.7.18 has 667 children, no doubt a scribal alteration due to the stigma attached to this number.