Verbal Parsing Key

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Examples:
εἶδον = AoAInd-1S (Aorist Active Indicative – First person singular)  
ἡνεωγμένη = PfPassPart-FNS (Perfect Passive Participle – Feminine Nominative Singular)

Other word classes: ADJ = Adjective, ART = Article, NON = Noun, PAR = Particle, PRO = Pronoun.

Revelation 13 Translation

My translation is given in bold first, followed by the Greek text then followed by parsing and grammar notes. For this text I’ve chosen to colour code the verbal aspects to see if there is any discernable pattern in the text. Also, imperative and subjective moods will be highlighted (see parsing key above). Other textual and lexical notes will be included and footnoted, as well as comments and observations. The final smoothed translation will be included at the end.

12:8 And [the dragon] stood on the on the sand of the seashore  
καὶ ἔστάθη ἐπὶ τὴν ἄμμον τῆς θαλάσσης.

13:1 then I saw, from out of the sea: a beast coming up, having ten horns and seven heads, and upon its horns ten crowns, and on its heads blasphemous names.  
καὶ εἶδον ἐκ τῆς θαλάσσης θηρίον ἀναβαίνον, ἔχον κέρατα δέκα καὶ κεφαλάς ἑπτά, καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν κεράτων αὐτοῦ δέκα διαδήματα, καὶ ἐπὶ τὰς κεφαλὰς αὐτοῦ ὀνόματα βλασφημίας.

AoPassInd-3S AoAInd-1S PrAPart-NAS PrAPart-NAS
ἔστάθη εἶδον ἀναβαίνον ἔχον

1 For additional information regarding the parsing paradigm, please refer to Porter, Fundamentals, xvi—xx.
In the NA28 Greek text, chapter 12 has an 18th verse, whereas some English translations will put 12:8 as part of 13:1. Also there is a textual variant of ἐστάθη, with some manuscripts having the first person ἐστάθην instead—which would mean that it was John standing on the shore. However, ἐστάθη is the preferred reading with a stronger manuscript support and given the flow of the text from 12:13-17, continuing the thought of dragon from 17 who went to make war with the woman’s seed, this is how he made war: by bringing up the beast from the sea. It would then be a logical flow for the dragon to be standing on the shore.2 “The dragon standing on the seashore is the beginning of what John saw in the vision in ch. 13 and not the end of the preceding vision in ch. 12.”3 So, verse 18 would be combined with 13:1 and rendered, “While he (the dragon) stood on the sand of the seashore, I then saw coming out of the sea: a beast—having ten horns and seven heads…” This would seem to keep the intended flow of thought in the text as the aorists in verse 18 and 13:1 seem to be backgrounding information and giving prominence to present aspect of the beast which is rising and has the horns and heads. However, Robertson notes that the present participle is common after ἐίδον in Revelation (see 10:1; 13:1, 11; 14:6; 18:1; 20:1).4 This makes sense, seeing as John has many ‘visions’ throughout the book—the present may be used to bring what he sees more to the foreground of the reader’s mind.

John hangs the second half of the verse on the present participle ἔχον to form a participial clause, κέρατα δέκα καὶ κεφαλὰς ἔπτα functioning as the direct object of ἔχον. The two subsequent non-verbal adjectival clauses (ἐπὶ τῶν κεράτων αὐτοῦ δέκα διαδήματα and ἐπὶ τὰς κεφαλὰς αὐτοῦ ὀνόματα βλασφημίας) expand on or characterize the initial participial clause. The first noun after the preposition (ἐπὶ)—τῶν κεράτων αὐτοῦ (his horns) takes the genitive case, and the second—τὰς κεφαλὰς (heads)—takes the accusative. A genitive following ἐπὶ is usually locative, so I’ve translated it “upon” and the accusative as simply “on.” However, since in the neuter, the nominative and accusative are the same form, it is possible grammatically that the participle here has multiple objects: “horns,” “heads,” “crowns,” and “name(s),” though John has a habit of using verbless clauses and may be doing that here.

There is another textual variant here between either the singular or plural for “name” or “names.” There are a few theories as to why. It could have arisen through a simply omission of the τὰ after μα or copyists may have tended to pluralize ὀνόματα to match with the plural κεφαλάς (heads) and because of the parallel in 17:3 (ὀνόματα βλασφημίας).5 The difference between the plural or singular could be that either each head had one same name on it (in the case of the singular) or that either each head had a different name or even that

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4 Robertson, A Grammar, 892.
each head multiple names (in the case of the plural). The UBS Handbook comments, “RSV translates a Greek text that has the singular name; TEV translates a text that has the plural ‘names.’ The text translated by TEV is preferable, and the translation can be, like TEV, ‘a name on each of its heads’ or ‘names on its heads.’” Comparing various translations show that it is a split decision—however, most Greek texts seem to favour the plural (except the TR and some others) and the UBS text brackets the τα to show the uncertainty of the reading. However, Codex Alexandrinus which may be considered the most reliable witness has ὄνοματα, so I have also chosen to go with the plural for my reading. The NA28 likewise uses the plural in their main text. In terms of deciding on whether if the plural is distributive or not, I have tried to render it ambiguously so it could be interpreted either way rather than imposing an interpretation on the text (though that is unavoidable).

2 And the beast which I saw was similar to a leopard, and its feet like a bear’s, and its mouth like the mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave his strength to it and his throne and great authority.

καὶ τὸ θηρίον ὧν ἦν ὀνοματα καὶ οἱ πόδες αὐτοῦ ὡς ἄρκου, καὶ τὸ στόμα αὐτοῦ ὡς στόμα λέοντος καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ ὁ δράκων τὴν δύναμιν αὐτοῦ καὶ τὸν θρόνον αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐξουσίαν μεγάλην.

AoAInd-1S εἶδον ImpAInd-3S ἦν AoAInd-3S ἔδωκεν

Grammatically there is not much of interest going on here—it seems pretty standard. The relative clause ὧν εἶδον is perhaps a bit redundant here and may not be necessary in the translation to be clear that John is still talking about the same beast. The imperfect tense of ἦν may be more heavily weighted as it is used in opposition to the aorist εἶδον, however, it is also used when an action is selected to dwell upon—which makes sense here as John is opening up about the appearance of the beast in the following description. However, since there is no aorist form of εἴμι, there probably isn’t good reason to read into the tense/aspect shift here specifically. Porter calls this verb (εἴμι) “aspectually vague.” The UBS Handbook

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7 See Palmer, “The Revelation of John,” 3—5 for a discussion on the comparison of the reliability of the various manuscripts. I’m uncertain as to the credentials of Mr. Palmer, however his writing seems to be well informed and his site shows a good knowledge of the subject matter. His input is only tenuously consulted for textual notes.

8 See Porter, Idioms, 22, 34.
suggests using “paws” instead of “feet” for πόδες, which is a natural choice to be used of a bear.⁹

In Daniel 7:3-8, the lion, bear, leopard and beast represent four successive empires. However, here in Revelation the four images are combined into one beast which highlights the extreme fierceness of the beast. Also, as the four kingdoms represented in Daniel 7 spanned hundreds of years, so too the empire represented here may also span toward even future oppressive kingdoms as 17:10-11 shows. Thus, this empire represented by the beast of Revelation 13 may transcend many centuries and represent “all world powers who oppress God’s people until the culmination of history.”¹⁰ The beast here also resembles that of the dragon in chapter 12 with seven heads, ten horns and diadems, which implies the same transhistorical nature as the dragon. The numbers “seven” and “ten” refer then to both the severity and worldwide scope of the oppressive power but also to the whole spectrum of antichristian powers and the total span of time during which these powers hold sway.¹¹

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<tr>
<td>ἐσφαγμένην</td>
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“The stative (perfect/pluperfect) aspect is most heavily weighted, and to use it in opposition to the perfective (aorist) and imperfective (present/imperfect) aspects implies the greatest semantic significance.”¹² The use of the perfect tense in the participle ἐσφαγμένην is noteworthy as this brings this action to the forefront the most. Combined with the fact that what is described here is one of the heads having been slain—this commands the attention of the reader—especially since it was healed after. Louw-Nida define σφάζω as, “to slaughter, either animals or persons; in contexts referring to persons, the implication is of violence and mercilessness—‘to slaughter, to kill.’”¹³ The addition of εἰς θάνατον (unto death) seems to be logically unnecessary (obviously slaughtering something is to death!), however it serves as

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emphatic. So this point in the narrative is probably something John is wanting to give extra attention to.

The UBS Handbook here interprets ὡς ἐσφαγμένην εἰς θάνατον as "a wound that seemed to be fatal (or, mortal)." It sights the later statement that the wound was healed as meaning that there was a severe scar that showed how serious the wound was, noting that, "whether or not the wound had been fatal depends on how verse 14 is understood." However, this phrase is an intentional parody of the Lamb which was slain in 5:6 which uses almost identical phrasing. So both in 5:6 and here in 13:3, a real death is portrayed.

Beale comments that, "God must be the unmentioned agent of the beast’s ‘wound’ (ἡ πληγή), since everywhere else in Revelation πληγή (usually rendered “plague”) is a punishment inflicted by God (so eleven occurrences and the cognate verb in 8:12)." He sees such a wound on the head of the great enemy of God’s people as reflecting Genesis 3:15 when seen together with 12:17.

The genitive noun τοῦ θανάτου is attributive to ἡ πληγή, thus expressing quality like an adjective. The verb ἐθαυμάσθη, though in the passive voice is perhaps functioning as a deponent and takes a middle sense—thus, the whole earth marvelled and not was marvelled. Some manuscripts have a variant reading of ἐθαυμάσθη ἐν ολῇ τῇ γῇ (e.g., MAV) which may have been due to some scribes seeking to alleviate the grammatical difficulty of the passive verb functioning as an active. However, the category of deponent is typically only used when there is no active form of the verb, and this verb does have an active form. So, the passive form was probably used for some reason—to translate it though, we’d have to use another English verb since ‘marvel’ does not have a passive form—but we could say “was amazed.”

Beale comments that, "ἐθαυμάσθη ὡς ἤγαν, ὡς ὁ πύθων τοῦ θηρίου probably is a pregnant expression for ‘[they] marveled at the beast and went after him,’ as the fuller form in 17:8 suggests. This use of the passive form in an active sense in 17:8, as people respond in worshipful astonishment at the beast’s ‘miraculous’ recovery, seems to confirm the active sense of the passive here. Beale comments, "that John can use the active form in 17:6–7 does not make impossible his use of the passive form in an active sense here." The verb θαυμάζω is usually rendered "marvel," or “be astonished.” Here, because of the synonymous use with

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17 Robertson seems to view it as deponent here, see Robertson, A Grammar, 334. Porter warns though that, “one must be cautious before abandoning too quickly the semantic feature usually grammaticalized by a particular voice form. On the basis of this evidence, and evidence above regarding the middle voice, one might be justified in seeing some middle sense with virtually all verbs with middle-voice form, regardless of whether they can be analyzed as deponent.” (Porter, Idioms, 72)
18 Beale, The Book of Revelation, 693.
“worship” in the next verse it takes on the meaning of “admire.” “In the light of vv 7–17, the word has the nuance of “render admiration for one’s own advantage.”

4 and they worshipped the dragon, because he gave authority to the beast, and they worshipped the beast saying, “Who [is] like the beast, and who is able to make war with him?”

καὶ προσεκύνησαν τῷ δράκοντι, ὅτι ἔδωκεν τὴν ἔξουσίαν τῷ θηρίῳ, καὶ προσεκύνησαν τῷ θηρίῳ λέγοντες: Τίς ὁμοίος τῷ θηρίῳ, καὶ τίς δύναται πολεμῆσαι μετ’ αὐτοῦ;

Following the verb προσεκύνησαν is τῷ δράκοντι and then later τῷ θηρίῳ, both of which are datives of advantage—since the action (worship) is directed to the dragon’s or beast’s benefit—however, worship normally takes a dative direct object anyways. The use of the present tense δύναται is perhaps emphatic here in the question, “Who is able to make war with him?” There are a few minor textual variants here, one of which is the replacement of ὅτι ἔδωκεν with the substantive perfect participle τῷ δεδωκοτι (the one who had given). This would change the second clause from being a clause of purpose or causality (why they worshipped) to simply clarifying the object of worship (the dragon) as the one who gave the beast authority. Another variant in Ψ47 2344 and syrh reads προσεκύνησεν (singular) instead of προσεκύνησαν (plural), which would mean the beast worshipped the dragon rather than the people. However, this reading does not have very strong manuscript support and is probably not original—possibly due to an error in hearing by the scribe.

5 And a mouth speaking great and blasphemous things was given to it, also authority was given to it to act [for] forty-two months.

Καὶ ἔδόθη αὐτῷ στόμα λαλοῦν μεγάλα καὶ βλασφημίας, καὶ ἔδόθη αὐτῷ ἔξουσία ποιῆσαι μήνας τεσσεράκοντα δύο.

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The passive construction of this verse implies some other agency, most likely the dragon, gives the foul mouth and authority to the beast. Patterson notes, “Some commentators have said that the dragon, or the Devil, stands behind him, while others have pointed to the fact that ultimately God wields all authority, and hence God provides this authority.”23 It is not unthinkable, at some level to consider both as possible and correct. Ultimately, God is sovereign over all and thereby, even demonic activity must be allowed by Him. However, in this case, with the context in mind and the dragon as the immediate antecedent—I think it reasonable to infer that the direct agent is the dragon, even if God is somehow the indirect agent allowing this to take place. As Luther commented that the devil is still God’s devil—meaning that he does not have ultimate autonomous authority—as seen in Job. At the discourse level, the repeated use of the passive ἐδόθη probably emphasizes that the Beast is given these things and does not have power/authority in and of himself. Beale comments,

“That God is the ultimate source of the beast’s authority in these verses is implied by the decreed time limit and the predestined number of those who worship him in v 8 (the same implication is found in the authorization clauses of Daniel 7). Only God, not the devil, sets times and seasons. The devil would never want to limit his work against God’s kingdom to a mere ‘three and a half years.’”24

The present participle λαλοῦν modifies στόμα, functioning adjectivally in the adjectival clause λαλοῦν μεγάλα καὶ βλασφημίας.

For premillennial interpreters, such as Patterson, they would interpret the forty-two months as possibly the latter half of the tribulation period.25 Beale (an amillennialist) sees an allusion to Daniel 7:25, which is clear from the other allusion to Daniel 7 here. “These three earlier references to the period show that the duration of the period spans the time from Christ’s death and resurrection to the culmination of history.”26 The period of time in 13:5 covers the same period of time as 11:2—3 and 12:6, 14.

Strengthening the connections with Daniel, Codex Sinaiticus has ο θελεί after ποιησαι, “to do what he wills.” This could attest to an affinity with the scribes at the time of connecting

23 Patterson, Revelation, 277.
25 See Patterson, Revelation, 276—277.
26 Beale, The Book of Revelation, 695.
this text to the portrayal of the eschatological opponent in Daniel 8:4; 11:3, 16, 36—all of which speak of a tyrannical ruler who will do according to his will.27

6 And it opened its mouth unto blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His Name and His dwelling place, [that is,] the ones residing in heaven.

καὶ ἠνοίξε τὸ στόμα αὐτοῦ εἰς βλασφημίας πρὸς τὸν θεόν, βλασφημῆσαι τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ καὶ τὴν σκηνὴν αὐτοῦ, τοὺς ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ ὑπηκοόντας.

The implied subject of ἠνοίξε is the beast as it is the most logical antecedent and also because of the connection with opening the mouth it was just given. There are several variant readings here, but the NA28 text has the more difficult reading (which is the norm for choosing which reading is more likely authentic). There is a καί before τοὺς in a few uncials, most minuscules, and early versions, which may be the effort of some scribes trying to improve syntax. If we go with the reading in the NA28 text, τοὺς ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ σκηνοῦντας should be understood in apposition to τὴν σκηνήν αὐτοῦ. This would mean the beast was blaspheming His Name and His dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven—the phrase would be further defining God’s dwelling place as with those who dwell in heaven. This seems to make sense in light of Rev. 21:3—“behold, the dwelling place of God is with man.” However, if we take the variant reading with καί as original, then it would be translated as an additional object of the verb, “it blasphemed against God, against His Name, His dwelling place and those who reside in heaven.”28 Beale comments,

“The equation of the saints with the heavenly tabernacle is virtually the same identification made in 11:1–2, where true believers living on earth were equated with the invisible, indestructible sanctuary of God (see also on 12:6, 14). Part of the textual tradition of 13:6 interprets well ‘those tabernacling in heaven’ as ‘his chosen ones, those who dwell in heaven ...’”29

I have chosen to go with the majority reading reflected in the NA28 as it seems to make the most sense theologically when considering Rev. 21:3 and also Ezek. 37:27, Eph. 2:22, and 1

29 Beale, The Book of Revelation, 697.
Pet. 2:5. This also makes sense in terms of the view of recapitulation in Revelation, here seeing the parallel with 11:1-2 where the nations trample the holy city for forty-two months.

7 And it was given to it to make war with the saints and to overcome them, also authority was given to it over every tribe and people and tongue and nation.

καὶ ἐδόθη αὐτῷ ποιῆσαι πόλεμον μετὰ τῶν ἁγίων καὶ νικῆσαι αὐτούς, καὶ ἐδόθη αὐτῷ ἐξουσία ἐπὶ πάσαν φυλήν καὶ λαὸν καὶ γλῶσσαν καὶ ἔθνος.

There are a few variants here of note:

“The absence of the clause καὶ ἐδόθη αὐτῷ ποιῆσαι πόλεμον μετὰ τῶν ἁγίων καὶ νικῆσαι αὐτούς in a variety of witnesses is no doubt due to an oversight in copying, the eye of the copyist passing from the first to the second occurrence of καὶ ἐδόθη αὐτῷ. Several minuscules introduce ἐξουσία (authority) from the following clause (“and authority was given to him to make war”), while other secondary witnesses modify the order of words.”

The use of the aorists here perhaps backgrounds this information a bit more than what comes next—to highlight by means of contrast. This information fills in some more details about the beast, but what is perhaps of more importance is what comes in the next verse—that the people whose names were not written in the book of life worship him.

8 and all the ones dwelling upon the earth shall worship him, those whose name had not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb which had been slain.

9 If anyone has an ear, that person must hear.

καὶ προσκυνήσουσιν αὐτὸν πάντες οἱ κατοικοῦντες ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, οὗ οὐ γέγραπται τὸ δόμον αὐτοῦ ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ τῆς ζωῆς τοῦ ἁρνίου τοῦ ἐσφαγμένου ἀπὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου. Ἐὰν ἔχει ὁ ὄχος ἀκουσάτω.
The use of οὐ as a pleonastic antecedent before αὐτοῦ is understood as a Hebraism—a feature often seen in the LXX due to the influence of the Hebrew upon the Greek text.31

Though the phrase ἀπὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου occurs at the end of the sentence, some connect it with γέγραπται—“except those whose names were written from the foundation of the world.” Others interpret it as connected to τοῦ ἀρνίου τοῦ ἐσφαγμένου—“the Lamb which had been slain from the foundation of the world.”32 Both are possibilities with support and an interpretation must be decided upon to translate this phrase. The first choice has appeal as it would be a parallel to 17:8 which implies that the elect were written in the book of life before the foundation of the world. However, the second option is also viable as paralleled in 1 Peter 1:19-20 and also because of its proximity to the phrase. I’ve chosen to go with the former because it seems to fit within the context of what is restated in 17:8.

Also in these verses, there is very obvious escalation in the use of verb tenses and aspect as well as mood. Whereas so far in the chapter it has been mainly dominated by aorist and a few present tense verbs, here there is a future, present, two perfects and an aorist imperative. These two verses are definitely emphatic and highlight a point which John wants his readers to pay close attention to. This is confirmed by the sharp command following in verse 9 which leads into the saying in verse 10. The strongly emphatic third person imperative ἀκουσάτω is hard to translate directly into English since it lacks a third person imperative form. This is why I have translated it as “that person must hear” to try to capture the force of the imperative. This phrase also links back to the letters of chapters 2 and 3, where it was repeated several times in the letters to the churches.

10 If anyone [destined to go] into captivity, into captivity that person goes, if anyone is to be killed by the sword by the sword that person is to be killed. Here is the endurance and faith of the saints.

εἰ τις εἰς αἰχμαλωσίαν, εἰς αἰχμαλωσίαν ὑπάγει· εἰ τις ἐν μαχαίρῃ ἀποκτανθῆναι αὐτὸν ἐν μαχαίρῃ ἀποκτανθῆναι. ὥδε ἔστιν ὁ ὑπομονῆς καὶ ἡ πίστις τῶν ἁγίων.

31 Robertson, A Grammar, 722—723.
This first part of the verse is admittedly quite weird in Greek, and it is no surprise that there are a plethora of variants found in the manuscripts. It is thought that the Greek construction may be a literal rendering of a Hebrew idiom.\textsuperscript{33} It seems to be a paraphrase which combines Jeremiah 15:2 and 43:11.

The point here of this saying is to encourage believers to endure and remain faithful under persecution. As with the use of the exhortation to hear which is used in the letters to the churches, it is meant to encourage the readers to not compromise and to strengthen their discernment having been given insight into what may be their potential destiny. The formula at the end, ὥδε ἔστιν ἡ ὑπομονὴ καὶ ἡ πίστις τῶν ἀγίων, is repeated in an expanded form in 14:12. There it also affirms the faithfulness of the saints to not worship the beast.\textsuperscript{34}

\textbf{11 And I saw another beast coming out of the earth, and it had two horns like a lamb, and it spoke like a dragon.}

Καὶ εἶδον ἄλλο θηρίον ἀναβαίνον ἐκ τῆς γῆς, καὶ εἶχεν κέρατα δύο ὡμοία ἄρνιον, καὶ ἔλαλε ὡς δράκων.

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<td>εἶδον</td>
<td>ἀναβαίνον</td>
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The use of ἂλλος signifies another beast of a similar kind to the first, in contrast to using ἕτερος, which would mean another beast of a different kind.\textsuperscript{35} So it would seem that this beast is somehow related to the first and conceived as being of the same type—which is confirmed in the description to follow. This verse also seems to start a new section which is dealing with this other beast, so it would make sense to make the paragraph break here.\textsuperscript{36} Here again, the use of the imperfective aspect in ἀναβαίνον and εἶχεν help to highlight the action and draw attention to the introduction of this new beast.

The UBS Handbook suggests that the horns of the lamb are small and depicting something inoffensive and gentle.\textsuperscript{37} However, Louw-Nida comment that ἄρνιον could be a sheep of any age. Also, in Rev. 13:11, “in which ἄρνιον refers literally to a sheep, it is used in a

\textsuperscript{33} See Omanson, \textit{A Textual Guide}, 537—538 for a discussion of theories behind the variants as well as Beale, \textit{The Book of Revelation}, 706—707.
\textsuperscript{34} Beale, \textit{The Book of Revelation}, 704—705.
\textsuperscript{35} Porter, \textit{Fundamentals}, 18.
\textsuperscript{36} Bratcher, \textit{A Handbook}, 200.
\textsuperscript{37} Bratcher, \textit{A Handbook}, 200.
phrase referring to the horns of an ἀρνίον. In such a context the reference is undoubtedly to a ‘ram,’ that is to say, the adult male of sheep.” Depending on how one interprets this word, it would change the perception of the second beast. If it has a lamb’s horns—it may seem to be innocuous and innocent, but when it speaks, it’s dragon’s voice would betray more sinister underlying character. However, if it is the horns of a ram, it could be that its first appearance is not quite so innocent looking—but may signify strength. One might try to keep some ambiguity by translating it, “two horns like a sheep.” However, given that there is possibly some ironic relation to the messianic Lamb of 5:6 and that this beast is to deceive people to worship and follow the dragon and first beast, the imagery of the deceptive nature of a seemingly gentle creature seems to be a more appropriate interpretation.

12 and it exercises all the authority of the first beast in the presence of it. And it makes the earth and all those who dwell in it so that they will worship the first beast, which was healed of its fatal wound.

καὶ τὴν ἐξουσίαν τοῦ πρώτου θηρίου πᾶσαν ποιεῖ ἕνωσιν αὐτοῦ. καὶ ποιεῖ τὴν γῆν καὶ τοὺς ἐν αὐτῇ κατοικοῦντας ἵνα προσκυνήσουσιν τὸ θηρίον τὸ πρῶτον, οὗ ἔθεραπεύθη ἢ πληγή τοῦ βασάνου αὐτοῦ.

PrAInd-3S    PrAPart-MAP    FuAInd-3P    AoPassInd-3S
ποιεῖ          κατοικοῦντας    προσκυνήσουσιν    ἔθεραπεύθη

Perhaps the word order here in front loading “the authority of the first beast” before the verb is meant to give prominence to this—that the second beast is the first beast’s representative in order to make all the inhabitants of the earth worship it. The double use of ποιεῖ, though it is the same verb—it is clear that the meaning in the first case is “to exercise” and the second sets up the ἵνα clause. Normally after ἵνα one expects the subjunctive, however—the future indicative προσκυνήσουσιν after ἵνα shows the certainty of the accomplishment of this intent. The UBS Handbook suggests, “it forces all the people in the world to worship the first beast.” The use of the aorist here in ἔθεραπεύθη makes sense in contrast to the rest of imperfect aspects which backgrounds this information which is
meant simply to clarify and remind the reader of the first beast who was healed of its fatal wound.

13 And it performs great signs, even so that it should make fire out of heaven to come down unto the earth before the people.

καὶ ποιεῖ σημεῖα μεγάλα, ἵνα καὶ πῦρ ποιη ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καταβαίνει εἰς τὴν γῆν ἐνώπιον τῶν ἀνθρώπων.

This verse continues the use of the imperfect aspect in the present tense to foreground the action. The ἵνα clause is followed as expected by a verb in the subjunctive mood. Though it functions as a resultative clause, the effect here is possibly a statement of incredulity—that it should even be able to make fire come down from heaven! Certainly this is a startling statement as fire from heaven is commonly understood as Divine judgement—how can the beast produce such a sign? It parodies Elijah’s prophetic demonstration (1 Kgs. 18:38-39; 2 Kgs. 1:10-14).

John uses the word σημεῖα most often in his writings as describing miracles. Its use has the indication of the purpose of these signs, which is that they are performed “in order to achieve a particular response or understanding.” In this case, the ability to do these public signs—seemingly confirming the beast as a spokesman for truth but really is a false prophet—“in the presence of the people” is for the purpose of deceiving those who live on earth. This is part of what Christ prophesied in Matthew 24:24, that false Christs and prophets would come showing great signs to mislead, if possible, even the elect.

14 And it leads astray those dwelling upon the earth through the signs that were given to it to do in the presence of the beast,

καὶ πλανᾶ τοὺς κατοικοῦντας ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς διὰ τὰ σημεῖα ἐδόθη αὐτῷ ποιῆσαι ἐνώπιον τοῦ θηρίου.

43 Beale, The Book of Revelation, 709.
44 Patterson, Revelation, 281.
The present participle τούς κατοικοῦντας is being used substantively, "the ones dwelling," which is further expanded by ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς. The use of διὰ with the accusative signifies the reason or cause for an event or state—that is, 'because of, on account of, for this reason.' So the leading astray of those dwelling on the earth is on account of the signs which were given to the second beast to do. Here, the relative pronoun ἃ matches its logical referent, σημεῖα, in gender, case and number. The use of the aorists here seems to continue to be connected with information which is backgrounded—the signs were already mentioned in the prior verse, so here it is just a reminder of that information and not meant to be foregrounded in the reader's attention. What calls for attention here is the leading astray of those dwelling on the earth. The use of the passive voice in ἐδόθη reminds us that the second beast's power is not inherent but rather given to it.

Some manuscripts and the majority text add ἐμοὶ between τούς and κατοικοῦντας, thus reading, "and it leads astray those of mine dwelling on the earth..." This seems to represent and early interpretation that the focus of this deception is from within the church. This would be similar to the warnings in Matthew 24:11, 24; Mark 13:22, 1 John 2:18, 2 Peter 2:1 and Acts 20:30. While this addition may not be original, it does help with the understanding of this passage, that false prophets can arise from within the church throughout the ages and is a constant threat to the people of God so that they should always be on guard.

ordering those dwelling upon the earth to make an image to the beast, who has the wound of the sword and lived.

λέγων τοῖς κατοικοῦσιν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ποιῆσαι εἰκόνα τῷ θηρίῳ, δὸς ἔχει τὴν πληγήν τῆς μαχαίρης καὶ ἔζησεν.

45 Louw, Greek-English Lexicon, 802—803.
46 Beale, The Book of Revelation, 710.
The use of ὃς as the relative pronoun for θηρίῳ does not match the grammatical gender, but the ‘real’ gender as it is speaking about the person this beast represents in the imagery of the vision.\(^{47}\)

\textbf{15} And it was given to it to put breath into the image of the beast, even so that the image of the beast might speak, and would make it so that as many as would not worship the image of the beast would be killed.

καὶ ἐδόθη αὐτῷ δοῦναι πνεῦμα τῇ εἰκόνι τοῦ θηρίου, ἵνα καὶ λαλήσῃ ἡ εἰκὼν τοῦ θηρίου καὶ ποιήσῃ ἵνα ὅσοι ἐὰν μὴ προσκυνήσωσιν τῇ εἰκόνι τοῦ θηρίου ἀποκτανθῶσιν.

AoPassInd-3S AoAInf AoASub-3S AoASub-3S AoASub-3P AoPassSub-3P
ἐδόθη δοῦναι λαλήσῃ ποιήσῃ προσκυνήσωσιν ἀποκτανθῶσιν

Grammatically this sentence is quite odd, especially given that ἵνα is used twice along with four subjunctives verbs. In fact, this sentence has so many verbs! The first two aorist indicatives definitely seem backgrounded, supplying the information leading up to the subjunctives. Also the phrase “the image of the beast” repeats three times here—so there is definitely some attention being drawn there. The first subjunctive naturally follows the first ἵνα and seems to convey a sense of consequence or result—the breath was put into the image so that it could speak—so there is not much odd there.

However, the second ἵνα following ποιήσῃ is awkwardly placed, and not surprisingly there are quite a few variant readings in the manuscripts. The second ἵνα should be required with ἀποκτανθῶσιν, however the best witnesses put it where it appears in the text. However, the Textus Receptus and a few other manuscripts does put it with ἀποκτανθῶσιν. This could be due to copyists trying to improve on the difficult syntax of ἵνα ... ἐὰν followed by two subjunctive verbs. Some manuscripts omit the second ἵνα altogether—probably accidentally.\(^{48}\) After all of this though, the meaning remains the same. What is perhaps a bit unclear is the subject of the passive verb—is it the beast or the image of the beast that puts them to death? Logically it seems to make sense that it would be the second beast, however, grammatically it seems ambiguous.

The ability given to the second beast to put breath into the image, while it could include magical power, refers also to anything that convinces people that the image represents true deity—it includes any substitute for the truth of God in any age. The “image”

\(^{47}\) See Robertson, \textit{A Grammar}, 712—713.

\(^{48}\) Omanson, \textit{A Textual Guide}, 538.
itself is said to be connected to the colossal statue which the emperor Domitian erected at Ephesus relating to the emperor cult. This would make sense as it is believed that the worship of the emperor cult was expected, and those disloyal to it would suffer persecution at the time of John’s writing. This also has an analog which can be applied to any time. 

16 And it makes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free and the slaves, that they should give to them a mark upon their right hand or upon their forehead,

καὶ ποιεῖ πάντας, τοὺς μικροὺς καὶ τοὺς μεγάλους, καὶ τοὺς πλουσίους καὶ τοὺς πτωχοὺς, καὶ τοὺς ἐλευθέρους καὶ τοὺς δουλοὺς, ἵνα δῶσιν αὐτοῖς χάραγμα ἐπὶ τῆς χειρὸς αὐτῶν τῆς δεξιᾶς ἢ ἐπὶ τὸ μέτωπον αὐτῶν,

The three accusative clauses expand and clarify/amplify the predicate πάντας—enumerating the various classes of people groups that πάντας encompasses. In this use of several attributes, the article is repeated with καὶ for each noun in these clauses to distinguish them or treat them as separate. The use of the subjunctive here after ἵνα is expected and this opens up the content clause explaining what the beast makes all to do. The UBS Handbook notes that this expression is causative and thus should be rendered passively as, “it required them to be marked” or perhaps “they were given a mark.” It notes that, “In Greek the impersonal third person plural of the active voice is used as an impersonal passive.” However, if the people are being forced to take a mark, it seems a little unreasonable why they are being held accountable for it. But, if they are getting it for themselves it makes sense why they are accountable for this. So then the sense may be that while they are told to do so, the people must take it upon themselves to get it. The fact that economic incentives can be used to coerce the people into getting it perhaps lends itself to this understanding as well.

The word χάραγμα, translated as “mark” has had various interpretations. The same word is used by Paul in Acts 17:29 referring to an image made my people’s design. It’s

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52 Palmer challenges this passive rendering of the verb though, saying that there is no reason not to render it actively—they should give them(selves) a mark. He points out that some variants show that this was the understanding of some scribes who attempted to correct the grammar by either changing it to a passive verb or suppling a reflexive pronoun. He also notes that the impersonal verb is usually third person singular not plural. (Palmer, “The Revelation of John,” 47—48).
symantic domain can include anything from the mark left from a snake’s bite to a brand or etching. Several suggestions have been made about it—from a tattoo to microchips. However, all of these are conjecture and the text nowhere says exactly what the mark will be. With regards to its historical context here, the χάραγμα was also used to describe the emperor’s seal on business contracts or the imprint of his head on coins. If this is in mind, it alludes to the state’s political and economic stamp of approval. The placement of the mark on the forehead is a parody of the “seal” in 7:3-8 placed on true believers and its primary focus is on spiritual identification with the beast. Since the seal is invisible, the mark is also. The parallel of the mark to the seal is made clear by the mention immediately following in 14:1 that God’s name is written on the foreheads of the saints.

17 and that no one should be able to buy or sell except the one having the mark, the name of the beast or the number of its name.

καὶ ἕνα μὴ τις δύνηται ἀγοράσαι ἢ πωλῆσαι εἰ μὴ ὁ ἔχων τὸ χάραγμα, τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ θηρίου ἢ τὸν ἄριθμόν τοῦ ὄνομάτος αὐτοῦ.

The ἕνα μὴ here is dependent on the ποιεῖ from verse 16 and the καὶ coordinates this clause together with ἕνα δῶσιν so that it is introducing the second thing that the beast makes people to do. So then, it makes them (1) to take the mark and also (2) to be unable to buy or sell—not that they should receive the mark so that no one should be able to buy or sell. This misunderstanding is reflected in the omission of the καὶ in some manuscripts. The participle ὁ ἔχων [τὸ χάραγμα] is used substantively here, and the following clause supplies the interpretation of the mark—the name of the beast or the number of his name. In “Hebrew and Greek, numbers were represented by letters, and each letter had a numerical value. The number of a name would be the sum total of the numerical value of the letters of that name.”

Patterson, Revelation, 281—282.
Bratcher, A Handbook, 204.
Here is wisdom, the one having understanding must discern the number of the beast, for it is a number of humanity, and the number of it [is] 666.

Here the narrative moves to direct address of John to his audience. It may be considered an exhortation to the reader. The use of the imperative calls for attention, only used in verse 9 in this chapter where it calls for the reader to pay attention—here it calls the reader to calculate or discern. The verb ψηφίζω could mean to calculate, however here it is more likely to mean “to understand, interpret or discern.”

There are also some interesting variations in the manuscript tradition on the number of the beast, such as 665 and 616. Interestingly, 616 is supported by manuscript C and to some manuscripts which Tyconius (4th century) and the second century Church Father Irenaeus knew. However, Irenaeus prefers 666 as it is attested in reliable copies and by those who had personally seen John, which seems to give quite strong evidence for 666 being the original.

There is much controversy over the meaning of the number 666 also. Many try to calculate it using gematria of names in Hebrew or Greek to be some historic figure or person such as Nero or Domitian or Hitler, Obama, Trump or any other sort of figure people have reason to demonize. I remain unconvinced of this methodology, since the method of gematria employed often seems quite arbitrary. Also, if John intended gematria to be employed, he probably would have been a bit more specific in his instructions such as, “calculate the number of his name in Greek/Hebrew/Latin.” Furthermore, it is unlikely that the basis for victory is some sort of mathematical cleverness. More likely the number is symbolic since all the numbers used in Revelation are used symbolically. Patterson comments, “But just as six falls short of the ideal number ‘seven,’ this false prophet who deceives the whole earth in this way is hopelessly compromised; and the repetition of the ‘six’ in its trifold form 666 is clearly intended to underscore the intrinsic evil bound up in this individual.”

Though the way John states the matter may imply that he might have a historical figure in mind, it is more likely being used as a model to warn believers to be wary of the imperfect and fallen world systems.

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57 Louw, Greek-English Lexicon, 381.
58 Omanson, A Textual Guide, 539. “According to Tischendorf’s 8th ed. of Novum Testamentum Graece, the numeral 616 was also read by two minuscule manuscripts that unfortunately no longer exist.”
59 Patterson, Revelation, 282.
and powers which rise up against God. They are to discern those things which are ‘antichrist’ and go contrary to God’s reign or set themselves up in rebellion against God. This truly calls for wisdom.

Smoothed Translation:

While the dragon stood on the sand of the seashore, I then saw a beast which had ten horns and seven heads coming up from out of the sea. Upon its horns were ten crowns, and blasphemous names were on its heads. This beast that I saw was similar to a leopard, with feet like a bear’s and a mouth like that of a lion. The dragon gave its strength, his throne and great authority to it. Also, I recognized that one of the beast’s heads had been fatally slain, but the fatal wound was healed, and the whole earth marveled and followed after the beast. And they worshipped the dragon because he gave authority to the beast, and they also worshipped the beast saying,

“Who is like the beast, and who can war against him?”

Also, the beast was given a mouth uttering great and blasphemous things. And it was given authority to act for forty-two months. So it opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His Name and His dwelling place—which is the people dwelling in heaven. The beast was also allowed to go to war with the saints and to overcome them, and it was given authority over every tribe, people, tongue and nation. So, everyone on earth—whose name had not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life which belongs to the Lamb who was slain—will worship it. If anyone has an ear, that person needs to take heed:

If anyone is destined to go into captivity,  
Into captivity that person goes;  
If anyone is to be killed by the sword,  
By the sword that person is to be killed.  
This is an exhortation for the endurance and faith of the saints.

Then I saw another beast coming out of the earth, and it had two horns like a lamb but it spoke like a dragon. It exercises all the authority of the first beast in its presence, and it causes everyone who dwells on the earth to worship the first beast which was healed of its fatal wound. It also performs amazing miracles, it would even make fire come down to the earth from heaven before the people. In this way it leads astray those who dwell on the earth through the signs it was allowed to do in the presence of the first beast and it orders them to

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60 Bratcher, A Handbook, 205.
make an image to the beast which was wounded by the sword and yet lived. It was also allowed to give breath to the image of the first beast so that the image might even speak, and makes it so that as many as who would not worship the image of the first beast would be put to death. It makes all—the small and great, the rich and poor, the free and slaves—to give themselves a mark on their right hand or forehead and ensures that no one could buy or sell without having the mark, which is the name of the beast or the number of its name.

This calls for wisdom: the one who has understanding must discern the number of the beast, for it is a number of humanity, and its number is 666.

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