

THE IMAGE OF THE BEAST ILLUSTRATED

LETTER VI

Near Cooch's Bridge, New Castle County, Delaware, July 8th 1831.

Brother Beebe: - I will now call your attention to the circumstance of the giving of life to the Image of the Beast. It is said, He had power to give life unto the Image of the Beast, g 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. Hence it is manifest, this second Beast will have power to give life to this Image. How this Beast, or the reformed churches, will obtain this power is principally conjecture; because the event is yet to be accomplished. In saying this, I would be understood as referring more particularly to the power to kill. The Image already has received power to speak, and we have heard him uttering from the Press, and by his Legates, in Associations and elsewhere, language like this, namely; that these religious schemes must triumph, and that all opposition must be put down; yea, that all who will not unite in supporting them must fall; which is speaking as much like the dragon as an image is like its original. From the source of this power we may form some conception whence the killing power will be derived. Indeed I should judge from the connection of this passage, that this giving life to the Image does not imply that the image will be made a living Beast that is a national religious establishment. I presume that it means something like a general control, which these religious societies combined, will obtain over the public, and probably over our national government, through the influence of the reformed churches, and by which they will be enabled to put down every person, who does not favor their plans. The object of the Reformed church, will not be so much to exalt these institutions as existing among the Baptists, as to obtain through them, as existing among themselves, an influence and power which will satisfy them, in place of being established by law. And the Baptist schemes being like their own, will share with theirs in the honor and power obtained. The Baptists indeed, in several instances are connected in the same union with the Paedobaptists, and bring but one in connection with several, they are but exerting themselves to promote the schemes of the Paedobaptists.

But I think we shall know with more certainty what is intended by the giving life to the Image of the Beast, that it shall cause as many as will not worship the Image, &c., to be killed, after that the Reformed churches shall have established their control over our national government in carrying their point

relative to Sunday Mails, and in some other arrangements, which they will propose to Congress when they shall have triumphed in this. These points they will carry not so much by their general fasts as by making the members of Congress, and others, feel that in order to secure their popularity, and their election to office, they must humor these things. I will pass on to notice the several circumstances mentioned in the three concluding verses of the chapter. Rev.13.

Before proceeding to give my views on the several circumstance mentioned in these verses, I will remark, that I necessarily differ from all others, so far as I am acquainted, who have attempted an explanation of them. This difference arises from the circumstance of others understanding the Beast herein mentioned to be the seven horned Beast, whereas I understand it to be the two horned Beast. I think myself justified in thus departing from the beaten track, by the connection of the subject. In the expression the mark or the name of the Beast, what other mark of the Beast can we suppose is intended than the mark which he caused all, both small and great &c., to receive? But the he of ver.16, referred to the two horned Beast, therefore this is the mark of that Beast, or that which he imposeth upon all.

In giving my views of these verses, I will notice first the mark which the two horned Beast caused "all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond to receive in their right hand or in their forehead." I understand this to have an allusion to the custom of persons marking their things, and in some cases, their servants, to designate them as theirs. So this Beast extending his claims to all, or at least his desires to bring all under his influence, causeth a mark to be set upon them, by which he may claim them as subjected to his control. Some he causeth to be marked in the right hand, and some in the forehead.

As this marking is connected with the giving of life to the Image of the Beast, it cannot refer to infant sprinkling, for that has been in practice ever since this Beast arose. It has indeed been used as a mark, hence we find those who practice, uniformly claiming the right of a control over those they have sprinkled. But the component parts of this Beast now want a more powerful claim upon all, both small and great, they are therefore engaged in fixing a more prominent mark upon them. The causing all to receive a mark, seems remarkably to point out the great exertions which are making at this time to bring all classes and all persons into a profession of religion, and consequently under the influence of the clergy. This may be considered the mark in the

forehead. The great success which has attended the several plans recently brought into practice for converting sinners, or rather for bringing them into the churches, but especially the Four day meeting plan, now in vogue, affords a striking comment upon the text now under consideration, as well as upon the circumstance of this Beast's bringing fire down from heaven in the sight of men. Indeed they speak of the success attending these Four-day meetings as being a repetition of the events of the day of Pentecost; that as the Holy Ghost then descended, so he now descends in answer to their prayers. But they either lose sight of, or do not understand the difference between the Holy Ghost being sent down by Christ upon his disciples, in fulfillment of his promises to them, and in confirmation of their faith in his being seated at the right hand of the Father, as the intercessor of his people, having all power in heaven, and in earth, and the coming down of what they call the spirit, in obedience to their prayers; or else their arrogance is unbounded. For what is this comparison which they make of their meetings with the day of Pentecost, short of a comparison between the testimony given the disciples, of the prevalency of Christ's intercession, and that which they claim as a testimony of the prevalency of their prayers.

The mark in the right hand being less conspicuous, may refer to that influence which is established over those who are induced to unite with the reformed churches in their great American or in corresponding Institutions. This marking is extended to many Baptists and to many who have joined no church, and we see too many instances of obsequiousness not to discover the power of the influence exerted.

However the mark of the Beast may also refer to some mark which should be established by the authority of this Beast, other than the gospel standard, as a criterion of religion. Such a mark has been established as was published several years since in periodicals, and from the pulpits. It is this; a support extended to what are called, the benevolent institutions of the day as the proper mark by which to judge of a person's true piety.

We pass to the Name of the Beast. This seems to mean nothing more than the name by which this Beast is designated. It may refer to the individual name by which either branch is known as well as to the collective name reformed. Being a member of a reformed church, the individual is termed a reformer in distinction from a papist. And the collective name as well as the name of the particular church passes from the church member to his children while they

continued attached to the congregation. Probably it is to these members of the congregation that this has particular reference in distinction from those who have the mark.

I will now offer some observations upon the Number of the Beast, or as it is called in verse 17, the number of his name.

It is said to be the number of a man, and his number is 666. By its being termed the number of a man, the most natural inference would be that it is a specific number used by man. Do you ask, how is the number 666 used as a specific number? I answer, in decimal arithmetic it is used frequently as the decimal of the fraction two thirds – $2/3$.

Let us then according to the wisdom which may be given us, count this number. First, we will count the figures of which it is composed. In doing this, we find the first, the central and the last alike. In applying this counting to the reformed churches, we shall find, if I mistake not, a striking correspondence. What was the beginning of the reformed churches? They themselves tell us, that it was corruption; for from the corruptions of the church of Rome, they profess to have reformed. What is their intermediate state, but as marked by many corruptions, which they brought from their mother church? And what can their end be, other than corruption, judging from their almost universal, and woeful departure from their originally professed doctrines, and their former strictness in receiving members? Secondly, let us count the number decimally; in doing this, we find it but an imperfect expression of the fraction $2/3$. We may go on with the operation of reducing the fraction to its equivalent decimal; till we multiply the decimal expression ad infinitum, and still it remains imperfect. The application of this to the reformed churches is easy. Their coming out from the church of Rome was with the professed design of expressing in their constitutions the true visible Church of Christ. But this so long as they remain upon their original foundation is impossible. For the church of Christ is a kingdom not of this world, but they are founded upon principles conformable to the Abrahamic Covenant. Consequently, their natural posterity, as such, are brought in to participate with them in the privileges and blessings of their covenant. Hence they are, in part, at least, kingdoms of this world, propagated by natural generation. They may reform as often as they please, yet so long as they retain a standing on their old foundation, they remain imperfect, viewed as expressions of the kingdom of Christ. They may have correct confessions of

faith, as some of them have had; they may have many heaven-born christians among them, as no doubt has been the case; they may have sound gospel preachers, as some of those churches frequently have had; they may immerse candidates upon a profession of faith, as they have occasionally done, still while they bring in their natural offspring, as such, they remain in part worldly, and therefore cannot be a kingdom not of this world. Thirdly; we will now count this number, by computing its assumed value. This as has already been noticed, is two thirds. By turning to Zech.13:8 & 9, we read, "And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die, but the third shall be left therein; and I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them, as silver is refined, &c." Compare this with Rev.14:9-12. I leave the application of this to be made in the accomplishment of these two prophecies.

Hence according to the view thus taken of this part of the prophecy concerning the two horned Beast, and the Image, it appears that he is preparing the way for issuing his decree, that no man may buy or sell; that is, figuratively, no man may preach or enjoy the privileges of public worship, except those who are brought under the influence of the clergy, and marked either in the hand or forehead; or such as belong to some one of the reformed churches, or congregations, and thus have the name of the Beast, or such as have the number of his name; that is, those who have in some way, conformed to those corruptions, or those plans, by which the church and world are blended, and the visibility of the church of Christ, as a kingdom not of this world is lost. This event when it takes place will evidently bring out the worshippers of the Image, and thus leave the adherents to truth to be put down and the witnesses to be slain.

I remain yours with christian affection, S. TROTT.