

2 “ MARK OF THE BEAST”

Satan is our adversary in this learning environment (I Pet. 5:8). This powerful being has wrecked havoc on society ever since God allowed him to emerge at the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3:1). His activity is about to be accelerated as we near the return of Jesus at the seventh trump (Mat. 24:24). Could you possibly be living in the last days of human existence on this earth? This is one of the most asked questions by many in the religious world. It is a very profound question because someday time will cease to exist! Countless sermons, books, and articles have focused on this subject of living at the dramatic close of this age. One of the subjects usually discussed in this realm is the presence of the “mark of the beast.” This subject has been used as a fear tactic by many in religion. Sometimes these fear tactics have been used with honest intentions and sometimes with very dishonest intentions. Although it has been the frequent subject of discussion, the understanding of the real meaning of the “mark of the beast” has been cloaked in mystery and fear down through history (Rev. 13:18). Most who proclaim to know its meaning are as confused as those to whom they teach. God does not want us living in fear (I John 4:18). This chapter will reveal the real meaning of this infamous mark and the proper action god expects from His students.

The fear of being branded with the mark of the beast has caused even the most zealous and dedicated Christians down through the ages to hope that somehow they would be able to escape the horrible things associated with this insidious mark. Many of the Christian faith have expressed hope that they will die in the faith before the “mark”

comes on the scene. Much of biblical prophecy involves the “mark” and those who choose to accept it in their foreheads and right hand. Jesus prophesied that in the last days perilous times would come (Mat. 24). He said that things would get so bad that if He did not return at that very moment no one would be left alive (verse 22). When we compare Jesus’ words in Matthew 24 with prophecies of the book of Revelation the thirteenth chapter, it is easy to see why many are very apprehensive about the future. Also the prophecies of incredible deceit that will exist at the end of our age increases the dread of many (Mat. 24:14). People wonder if they themselves will be deceived by this extreme deception.

A dramatic event is prophesied to happen very quickly when conditions described in Matthew 24 get to the boiling point on this earth. Jesus will step in and save humanity from extinction (verse 22). He will return with power and authority at the blowing of the seventh trump. He promised that the days of this age would be shortened for the elect’s sake upon this earth. The earth, prior to His return, will be engulfed in world-wide conflict and destruction. By the time the seventh trump sounds, the earth will have suffered from the previous seven seals and the previous six trumpets described in the book of Revelation (Rev. chapters 6, 8, and 9). Our earth will be in a state of destruction and chaos as these events unfold. Many who live at this moment in time will suffer death before Jesus’ triumphant return. Some of these individuals will have died branded with the mark of the beast! Although mankind will be saved from extinction by Jesus’ return, most will not survive the calamities at the end of this age. Even after Jesus’ return an

army of 200,000,000 will be destroyed in a flash at the Battle of Armageddon (Rev. 9:14-16 and 16:12-16).

During the dramatic climax of this present age, there is a description in the bible of the beast ascending out of the pit (Rev. 11:7). Satan and his powerful influence will be thrust upon this world as an accelerated dangerous and destructive force upon mankind. Satan is described as a roaring lion that goes about to destroy all in his path (I Peter 5:8). The “mark of the beast” will be enforced upon mankind! Who would want this destructive individual’s mark placed upon them as a sign of their allegiance? Is this “mark of the beast” just an end time experience? Is the “mark of the beast” already here! Is it possible that most, if not all, reading this material have already tasted and experienced the destructive force of this dreaded mark? Only those sealed with God’s Spirit will be resurrected at the seventh trump. Those with Satan’s mark will not be resurrected at this historic time of the seventh trump. The stakes become rather high for each and every one of us. It is very important for all of us to recognize what the mark really means and understand when its influence was established on this earth. There are some key words that we need to examine in getting a clear understanding of the “mark of the beast”. Those words are: mark, beast, forehead, and right hand (Rev. 13:16-18).

The word “mark” in the King James Version of the Bible comes from the word “charagma” (#5480 in Strong’s Concordance). This word is like a stamp and described as a badge of servitude. This servitude will be upon the poor and the wealthy (Rev. 13:16). All who refuse this mark will not be allowed to freely buy

and sell (Rev. 13:17). Those who receive the “mark” will suffer eventual destruction (Rev. 14:9-10). God will not be pleased with any one who chooses to serve Satan instead of their creator (Rev. 16:2). Eventually, God will deal with this rebellion (Rev. 19:20). Those who refuse this mark are promised great rewards (Rev. 15:2 and Rev. 20:4).

The word “beast” in the King James Version of the Bible comes from the word “Therion” (#2342 in Strong’s Concordance). The description is that of a dangerous animal or a trap. This same word is used in several places in the Bible. It is the same word used to describe Satan like a roaring lion (I Peter 5:8) and for the beast ascending out of the pit (Rev. 11:7). It is a force that has the ability to do serious harm to us and should be avoided at all costs.

The word “forehead” in the King James Version of the Bible comes from the word “metopon” (#3359 in Strong’s Concordance). This word, which means our countenance, involves our minds and the way we think. If we accept Satan’s mark we have accepted his way of life. His way of life is the works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19). God’s way of life is the” fruit of the Spirit “ (Gal. 5:22). This word is used in several scriptures that involve receiving Satan’s mark (Rev. 14:9, Rev. 17:5, and Rev. 20:4). This same word is also found in several scriptures that involve people who choose God’s way of life (Rev. 7:3, Rev. 9:4, Rev. 14:1, and Rev. 22:4). It is the same choice that mankind has been asked to make since the Garden of Eden. The choice of right and wrong.

The word “right” in the King James Version of the Bible comes from the word “dexios” (# 1188 in Strong’s Concordance). It means in the very act of doing something or committing an actual crime. The word “hand” comes from the word “cheir” (# 5495 in Strong’s Concordance). It means an instrument or a means of doing something. The word “forehead” in the previous paragraph involved your thoughts. This concept of “right hand” means you actually carry out your thoughts with action.

If you combine the true meanings of the key words mark, beast, forehead, and right hand in a sentence, the meaning becomes very clear. It informs us that if we accept the “mark of the beast” that we are a servant to the devil and our thoughts and actions are representing him. Most of humanity since the Garden of Eden would fit into this category. Mankind, in general, has gone down the path of serving Satan instead of God. Is it possible that you could have his mark at this very minute? Are your thoughts and actions representing Satan’s way of thinking more than they should?

We still have one more key element to identify. That element is the number “666” (Rev. 13:16-18). It is the most feared combination of numbers of all time. The word “six” in the King James Version of the Bible comes from the word “ci xi stigma” (#5516 in Strong’s Concordance). When you look this number up in Strong’s Concordance it takes you to “#4742” for its origin. The definition means a mark for recognition of ownership or a sign of service. When it says “666” is the number of man it means the number that

represents man. Man was created on the sixth day and the number has always been recognized as the number associated with man. Why would there be three sixes in a row instead of just one? The mind of man has never been subject to the laws of God (Rom. 8:7). We are told that in the last days Satan will be able to stir that rebellious nature up so much it will be as in the days of Noah. The nature of mankind will become as it was in Sodom and Gomorrah (Mat. 24:38 and II Pet. 2:1-6). The same evil that has been prevalent down through the history of man will be at its highest level. The consecutive numbers of six represents an acceleration of evil at the end of this age. We are fast approaching that level of evil in this age!

Satan's mark has been placed on the inhabitants of this society down through the ages. This powerful influence on mankind will accelerate as we near the close of this society. Satan will attempt to make an imprint in your life that resembles his way of thinking. Under close examination, would you resemble Satan's influence or God's influence in the way you live your life? Do you have more of the "works of the flesh" or the "fruit of the Spirit" in your life (Gal. 5:19-23)? Satan has placed his mark of destruction on civilization ever since the third chapter of Genesis. Have you allowed yourself to be a part of that process? You must remove all aspects of Satan's mark that leads to works of the flesh in your life. This removal must be replaced by God's mark of the "fruit of the Spirit" in your life. Down through the ages a few individuals have opted for God's mark over Satan's. Those courageous individuals, who have made the right decision, will be resurrected at the seventh trump (I Cor. 15:52). All others must wait for a future resurrection (Rev. 20:5).

The sad history of mankind's wrong decision on whom they will serve outlines the destructive force of Satan's mark. The accelerated destructive force of human nature within man, a mind patterned after Satan's mind, will be unleashed upon the earth at the end of this age (Rev. 17:13). It will be human nature multiplied in its intensity (666). The number of man! It will be an acceleration of evil thoughts and actions among the inhabitants of the whole earth. Prophecy speaks of a time when the conscience of man will be seared with a hot iron (I Tim. 4:2). It will be a time when there will be an absence of natural affection for others and their welfare (II Tim. 3:1-3). We seem to be in the midst of that prophetic time at this very moment!

What does God see in your personal life today? Whose influence prevails in your mind? Do you perform the "works of the flesh" or the "fruit of the Spirit" in your ever day life? God knows all of your thoughts. He knows your secret faults that may be hid from others (Ps. 19:12). Absolutely nothing in you life can be hid from Him (Eccl. 10:20). Many spend way too much time on thoughts that lead to destruction than they do on thoughts of salvation (Ps. 36:4). Human nature unbridled leads to actions like road rage, arguments, and eventually to a mob mentality. It is not in man to obey God (James 4:4). Our minds are naturally programmed for rebellion. Since our minds are programmed to rebel, you could even fail to recognize Jesus at His return. Is it possible in the climax of this age that you could be rooting for the 200,000,000 man army that goes against Him (Rev. 9:16)? God tells us in the Bible that we are servants to whom we obey (Rom. 6:16). Whichever

way you are leaning in regard to the “works of the flesh” and the “fruit of the Spirit” is an indication to which side you will be on at that crucial moment in time.

Should you take Satan’s influence in your life lightly? You don’t have to be involved with satanic worship and witchcraft to be of Satan. His influence can be much more subtle. Your ever day functioning in society may be a sign of a satanic nature in you. How do you treat other people? Do you operate as child of God or a child of Satan? Satan will absolutely have no mercy on you in this life. He never has and never will be on your side. If you let him have the opportunity, he will destroy you! The “beast power” at his command has been a cruel and corrupt political force down through history that will reach the height of its influence at the end of this age in one final revival. The “false prophet” is a cruel and corrupt religious system that has deceived the world down through history that will reach the height of its influence at the end of this age in one final revival (Rev. 17). If you have Satan’s “mark” you will feel comfortable in this system. If you have God’s “mark” it will be very hard to function in society (Rev. 13:7). Some down through the ages and others also in the near future will have given up their lives because they opted for God’s “mark” over Satan’s “mark” (Rev. 20:4). They have replaced Satan’s thoughts with God’s thoughts. It will be those few individuals who will be resurrected at Jesus’ return. The analogy of the mark in the forehead is symbolic of your thoughts. The analogy of the “mark” in the “hand” is symbolic of your actions that are propelled by your thoughts. Will you choose to be among those who had the courage to resist Satan’s mark?

Servants of God have been required to choose whether they will live their lives according to the “ways” of God or the “ways” of Satan since the Garden of Eden. For those who would be a part of the Kingdom of God, they must follow that which is good (III John 1:11). God wants you to personally make the right choice for your salvation (Heb. 10:22). He will provide every opportunity possible for you to choose the right way. He will never force you to make the right decision. It must be your free-will choice. Those of the early New Testament church had to make those same choices. They also had to choose between the two marks you face today. Remember from chapter one of this book that the choice was given to Adam and Eve at the Garden of Eden. They had to choose between Satan’s mark (death) and God’s mark (eternal life). It was the choice of “works of the flesh” or the “fruit of the Spirit.” To be a part of God’s family you must be transformed from the children of Satan into the children of God (I John 3:10).

Is it possible for you to completely eliminate Satan’s “mark” of domination in your life? Could this transformation of the mind happen in your life time? The answer to both questions is “yes.” Coming totally out of Satan’s influence to a total conversion to God’s influence is like working your way through a maze. God promises He will help you to make the transition. Accomplishing this conversion of the mind should be your full time job. You can never retire or take a vacation from this process. You must bring all thoughts under the obedience of Christ (II Cor. 10:5). You must constantly be aware of becoming weary of making the conversion. The parable of the wise virgins and the foolish virgins shows you that taking your calling for granted is a dangerous move (Mat.25:1-10). You must be about your Father’s business on a constant basis (Luke 2:49).

God will never accept half-way attempts in your allegiance to Him (Rev. 3:16). You must know what is at stake in your service to God as opposed to a servant of Satan. God is offering you everything in His Kingdom if you will only choose Him as your Father. You must continue this pursuit of the Kingdom of God until the end of your life (I Cor. 15:10-11). God requires excellence from you. He won't accept partial conversion from anyone. You should be a shining beacon of light in this world of darkness and deceit (Mat. 5:16).

God placed us in an environment of corrupt governments (beast system) and in an environment of deceitful religious systems (false prophets) for a reason. It has been a necessary evil force to help us perfect the nature of God in our lives. This opposite force of Satan's influence to God's way has been allowed to exist by His will. After all, God has allowed Satan, human nature, and a corrupt atmosphere to exist from the very beginning. In this difficult system He requires us to make a choice. The wrong choice is easy to make in this society because of Satan's influence. The other choice takes character and the power of God's Spirit to accomplish it. But the latter choice leads to eternal life (Deut. 30:19). We should despise everything about Satan and his influences. The ability to make the right choice leads to eternal life in the Kingdom of God. When we fully understand God's perfect plan even the existence of evil makes sense (James 1:2-3). Jesus said, "I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). God requires us to someday say the very same thing about our conversion of the mind. Anything less is not enough. God wants His "called out" servants who are preparing for the sounding of the seventh trumpet to be bold in their pursuit of their destiny. As a result of this boldness, there will be a crown of righteousness awaiting them (II Tim. 4:8).

Satan's "mark" will someday cease to exist. God's "mark" will last for eternity. These two choices to embrace have been in existence since the Garden of Eden. The challenge of making the right choice has been there for everyone, not just those who lived at the end. Most have received the "mark of the beast" without knowing it. We have all succumbed to that influence in our lives. Some have risen above that influence. It's a matter of choice. The seventh trump will sound and the ones sealed by God's Spirit, whether dead or alive, will be resurrected to eternal life as Priests in the Kingdom of God. The rest will have to wait another thousand years for a resurrection (Rev. 20:5). A misunderstanding of the real meaning of what the "mark of the beast" represents could cost someone at least a thousand years. The first resurrection (seventh trump) is called the better resurrection (Heb. 11:35). Why not choose the best. The Father and Jesus by His side are rooting for you. With them on your side you can make it if you really want it. You are being called now! Don't take this calling for granted! Two groups of a 144,000 will have made the right choice when the seventh trump sounds. Will you be one of the ones selected? God wants you to make it. It is your choice!