

**THE COMING OF THE LORD  
THE MARK OF THE BEAST  
REVELATION 13:16-18**

**Introduction:**

We have arrived at a passage of Scripture that has been the subject of more speculation than possibly any other. For centuries people have been trying to decipher the *Mark of the Beast*. Some people actually fear the number 666.

In addition to there being a lot of speculation concerning what the *Mark of the Beast*, there is also a lot of misinformation concerning this subject as well. These verses give us some of the information we need to understand just what the *Mark of the Beast* is.

Now understand, we won't learn everything we would like to know, but we will learn enough to know that no Christian in this room needs to be afraid of the *Mark of the Beast*.

So, let's look at these three verses today. Let's see if we can dispel some of the mystery surrounding the Mark of the Beast. There are some characteristics of the Mark of the Beast that I do want to point out:

**I. IT IS A MARK OF IDENTIFICATION! (v. 16)**

As I've said before, there has been much speculation concerning what the *Mark of the Beast* might be:

Some believe that it might be some sort of a barcode system that is tattooed into the skin. People would then have to scan their code to access their money to buy and sell.

Laser tattoos can be produced that are invisible to the naked eye, but which show up under ultraviolet light.

If you have been to Disney World, Six Flags, or any other theme park and left the park with the intention of returning, they stamped your hand with an invisible stamp. When you came back in, you passed your hand under an ultraviolet lamp and the mark became visible. But that stuff washes off. The *Mark of the Beast* is a permanent mark.

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Scientists have also developed tiny microchips the size of grains of rice. They call them V-chips. These chips can carry all of your medical and financial information and they can be read with a simple scanner.

These chips are already being used in pets, and there has been talk of placing these microchips in babies to prevent kidnappings and mistakes at the hospitals. Because with these chips, people and/or things can be tracked regardless of where they are in the world.

**Technology is advancing so rapidly and there are so many possibilities, we just don't know what the devil will use! But listen, we don't HAVE to know (I'll get to this point later)!**

We can all see how our society is moving away from cash already! I hardly carry around any cash at all!

The use of **plastic currency** has been quickly replacing cash as the standard in business transactions. This is already being used by the government now for **food stamps and other government services**.

Some have suggested that the move away from cash to plastic is the precursor to *Mark of the Beast*. Whether we like it or not, we are headed toward a cashless society.

Because it makes sense in the evil world in which we live! Without cash, crooks and drug dealers will have a more difficult time! Without cash, there is less likelihood that people could hide their income from the IRS. We are moving in that direction!

Again, whether we like it or not, we have already been reduced to a number. Just about everywhere you go you need your **Social Security number!**

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Everybody has a number! They are issued automatically at birth! We know that computers like numbers better than names, and you can be sure that computers will be involved with whatever system the Antichrist devises.

The stage is set and the minds of people are prepared for some system of public identification.

We are on the verge of seeing a national identification card for citizens of our country. Given all the problems we are having with illegal immigration, there is a rising cry for some sort of identification card or system that can identify who is and who isn't an American citizen.

While we cannot know for sure what the *Mark of the Beast* is, we can learn something about how it will be utilized in that day.

**A. The Scope Of This Mark! “causeth...all”**

The word “*causeth*”, means “*to force*”. We are told that all people of all classes will be required to wear this mark on the bodies.

Everyone, from the most common of men to the most famous of celebrities, will bear this mark in their bodies.

It will be a universal mark. For once in this world there will be no favoritism and no discrimination. Every person from the savage in the darkest jungles of Africa to the executive living in the New York penthouse will receive the Mark of the Beast.

**B. The Situation Of This Mark! “in the right hands, or in their foreheads”**

This mark will apparently be placed either in the hand or in the forehead.

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The word “*mark*” comes from a word that means “*a stamp, an imprint, something carved*”. Whatever this mark is, it will reside in the flesh, and it will be permanent. People will not be able to alter it or counterfeit it. It will be placed where it can easily be accessed.

**C. The Source Of The Mark!**

The “*he*” in verse 16 refers to *the False Prophet*. From last week's message, we know that *the False Prophet* is the one who causes the world to worship the *Antichrist*.

He is the one who causes the image of the *Antichrist* to move and speak. He is the leader of the one world religion that will dominate the world during the Tribulation. He will devise this marking system and he will see that it is carried out.

*IT IS A MARK OF IDENTIFICATION...*

**II. IT IS A MARK OF ISOLATION! (v. 17)**

**A. The Power Of This Isolation.**

The mark will be tied to the economy. People will be required to produce *the Mark of the Beast* in order to be able to buy or sell.

This, in itself, will be a great enticement for people to receive *the Mark of the Beast*. In order to hold a job, to get credit, to access bank accounts, or to do something so mundane as buy a loaf of bread, will require a person to have *the Mark of the Beast*. Imagine the reality of what this will involve!

This mark will instantly divide the world into two camps. *The Mark of the Beast* will declare who worships the Antichrist and who does not. It will prove to be a mark of isolation.

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**B. The Purpose Of This Isolation.**

The Antichrist will use *the Mark of the Beast* to control the world.

Everything in the world during the Tribulation will be controlled! Food, housing, medical care—everything financial, will all be dispensed only to those who have *the Mark of the Beast!* This mark will give *the Antichrist* instant power over every person everywhere in the world!

**Regarding World War II ration cards:**

*Ill. A man who had lived under Bulgaria's communist regime remarked: "You cannot understand and you cannot know that the most terrible instrument of persecution ever devised is an innocent ration card. You cannot buy and you cannot sell except according to that little, innocent card. If they please, you can be starved to death, and if they please, you can be dispossessed of everything you have; for you cannot trade, and you cannot buy and you cannot sell, without permission."* (Cited in W. A. Criswell, Expository Sermons on Revelation [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1969], 4:120–21)

**C. The Persecution Of This Isolation.**

There will be many who will refuse to accept *the Mark of the Beast*. The 144,000 Jewish evangelists will not take the mark. Their converts will refuse to take the mark. There will be literally millions of people around the world who will refuse to bow to *the Beast* or to his image. They will reject the ministry of *the False Prophet*. These people will suffer greatly for their decision.

They will not be able to buy food, clothing or medicine. They will be refused medical treatment. Many, no doubt, will starve to death in order that they might not dishonor the name of the Lord Jesus.

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These people will be hunted down and persecuted to the death because of their defiance and testimony. (**13:15; 6:9**)

These people will pay a terrible price for their faith in Jesus, but they will be rewarded greatly when they leave this world. (**Revelation 7:9-17**)

Although we may not be persecuted for our faith in Jesus today, we are a marked people. The world is ramping up its hatred of the Lord Jesus and of those who follow Him. We can expect to see more of this kind of hatred intensify as we move closer to the end.

Believers in this day need to continue to take a stand for Jesus in spite of what they might face for doing so. We need to be faithful to Him, even unto death, if necessary.

*IT IS A MARK OF IDENTIFICATION...ISOLATION*

**III. IT IS A MARK OF INFORMATION. (Vs 17-18)**

**A. It Reveals The Name Of The Beast.**

We are told that the mark is tied to a number and that this number is tied to the name of *the Beast*.

This has led to some wild speculation over the years. In ancient times, number values were attached to Greek and Hebrew letters.

Using what is known as "*gematria*", which is an ancient form of numerology, a number is assigned to each letter in the alphabet. These numbers are then used to seek hidden meaning in words. The people who believe in such things believe that numerical equivalents in names and words is not coincidental, but providential. The Beast's name, when it is known, will yield the number "666".

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People have used this system to propose many different possibilities as to who might be *the Antichrist*. They have taken the letters in people's name added up the numerical value and declared that this person or that person had to be *the Antichrist*.

Some of those suggested have been Adolph Hitler, Napoleon Bonaparte, Ronald Reagan, Bill Clinton and George W. Bush. Back in the 1980's some people believed that Gorbachev was the Antichrist because that huge birthmark he had on his head.

The fact is. We do not know who *the Antichrist* is. We can do all sorts of numerical gymnastics, but we will still be in the dark concerning his identity. But, when he appears, the people living in that day will have all the information they will need to be able to identify *the Antichrist*.

*It Reveals The Name Of The Beast.*

**B. It Reveals The Nature Of The Beast.**

We are told that the Beast's number is "*the number of a man*". His number is "666".

When we studied Biblical numerology, we saw how that the number six in the Bible is the number of man.

Man was created on the sixth day.

This number is just short of the number of completion or perfection, the number 7.

*The Antichrist* will be the pinnacle of human achievement. He will be the brightest, most powerful human that the world has ever seen, outside of the Lord Jesus Christ. He will be a remarkable man, but he will still fall short of completion and perfection. His number declares his deficiency.

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Man is represented by the number six. God is represented by the number seven. Seven speaks of completion and perfection.

God is perfect and complete, whether you are speaking of the Father, the Son or the Holy Spirit. He is a "777".

Satan and his unholy trinity can never compete with God. They will give it their best, but they will still be just "666". They will never be complete and perfect because they lack God!

(Note: Why would anyone choose this number? We have to assume that if *the Antichrist* is the ruler of the world, he must be able to choose his own number. Why 666? He may do it to stand in defiance to God. After all, the Lord has declared that the devil's superman will wear this number and be defeated. He may do it out of pure rebellion.

Of course, this number might just be for God's people to be able to recognize him when he comes. Either way, this number will declare his name and his nature. When he comes, the people of God will be able to identify him and thus refuse his mark.)

**Conclusion:**

One of the practical lessons we can take away from this passage is this truth: Satan always marks his people. He marks their bodies, their souls and their minds.

On the other hand, God seals, 2 Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:13; 4:30; Rev. 7:2-8. Satan marks those who give themselves to him. God seals those who come to Him through Jesus. He seals them for Himself and He seals them for all eternity!

These are some terrible days that we see coming on this earth!

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Satan is going to have free reign down here for several years and billions will be brought under his grip for time and eternity.

Every one of these people who take *the Mark of the Beast* are destined for eternity in the Lake of Fire. (Revelation 14:9-12) They cannot take the *Mark of the Beast*, worship Satan and then be saved. If they bow to him, they are lost forever! That is a terrible truth!

Do not let that happen to you! Come to Jesus while there is time to be saved.