

Mark Of The Beast And 666

'For the time has come for the judgement to begin with the household of God, and if it begins with us, what will be the end of those who do not believe or obey the Gospel of God?' (1 Peter 4:17). The household of God are the Bible believing Jews and Christians who have received the invisible 'mark' or seal of the Holy Spirit. Revelation 9:4 mentions an absence of the seal or mark of God on the foreheads of non-believers.

Since we know that the seal or mark of God is invisible, we can safely assume the 'mark' of the beast is also invisible. It is described as an inscription (Revelation 13:16), but so is the invisible seal of God (Revelation 14:1). We have all heard the phrase 'He is a marked man'. It does not mean the man has a tattoo on his head; it means his behaviour sets him apart from others; his mark is a distinguishing feature or characteristic. Another phrase is 'A mark of respect'. It does not mean people who show respect have special marks on them. It is a distinguishing trait. 'Poverty left its mark on the children' does not mean the poor children had marks drawn on them – it means they showed signs of suffering from the poverty. 'Mark my words' does not mean to write the words down, but it means to notice, watch carefully or pay attention to what the person is saying. To 'make one's mark' is to make a significant achievement.

The point we are making here, is that the difference between God's people and non-believers, is their way of life. God's people have the fruit of Godliness, which sets them apart from non-believers – it is not a visible 'tattoo'. The 'mark' or characteristic of a Christian is the fruit of the Spirit, as shown in Galatians 5:22 & 23 and Ephesians 5:9. That is the set 'mark' spoken of in Ezekiel 9:4. It is the dislike of sin. Godly people 'sigh and groan' over all the sins committed by the ungodly. The 'mark' of an unsaved person is their fruit or their behaviour and speech as Jesus said; "You shall know them by their fruit" (Matthew 7:20). The 'mark' of the beast on a person, or the 'mark' of an evil person is their fruit. They have to consent to have that 'mark' or trait or characteristic by either accepting or rejecting salvation. If people accept salvation, they will have the invisible mark or seal of God; His fruit. If they reject Jesus' sacrifice and offer of salvation, then they will have the mark of the devil, or the beast on them. The Bible does not say they receive a tattoo, implant, microchip or any other such thing; the Bible says simply that they did not have their names written in the Lamb's Book of Life (Revelation 13:8) and that is what set them apart; that was their 'mark'. The non-believers broke out in sores because they did homage to the beast and they reviled and blasphemed the name of God (Revelation 16:2, 9 & 11). That truly is the behaviour or 'mark' of an unrepentant person. That behaviour is exactly what believers in Islam do; they worship the beast and blaspheme the name of Jesus our Lord. They say, "God does not have a Son." That is blasphemy because all through the holy scriptures we are told about the Son of God and His sacrifice for us, and to deny that is to deny Him. That is the 'mark' of evil.

When the scriptures say that no one will have the power to buy or sell without that 'mark' or trait of the world (Revelation 13:17), it shows that people without the 'mark' or those believers who did not have the Godless attitude of the world, were not allowed to buy or sell. It shows dreadful persecution of believers because the Lord calls for patience, faithfulness, steadfastness and endurance of the people of God (Revelation 13:10 and 14:12). This is exactly what happened to the poor Jews in Germany and Poland before and during the second world war. They were not allowed to buy or sell; they were persecuted; people would not serve them and they were chased out. We need to look at this scripture in perspective. It does not take power to buy items from a grocery store; it takes a bit of money and the willingness of the person behind the counter to serve us, and

that empowers us to buy what we need. It does not mean that no one will be able to buy or sell anything without a tattoo on their heads.

Changing the subject slightly; we have been asked if the pet microchip is the beginning of the 'mark' of beast. No it's not. It is a very good idea to have your pets micro-chipped, so if they wander off the owner can be easily contacted. People have been reunited with their lost pets after a couple of years, thanks to the microchip. It is nothing more sinister than modern technology and that's all there is to it, and it is not a sinful thing.

In Revelation 13:18 the 666, or the number of the beast is only the number of a certain man. The beast would have influenced this man for sure, but it is still only the number of a certain man. But what man? If we look at the time in which the writer of Revelation, John the Apostle lived, we know that Nero was the ruler of the Roman Empire at that time. The written Hebrew language has no vowels like we have in written English. The name Caesar Nero, pronounced 'Kaisar Neron' (or Emperor Nero in Latin) was written in Hebrew (in the English equivalent) as Q S R. N R W N.

If we add the numerical value of each of those letters or characters, we come up with a total of: Q = 100; S = 60; R = 200; N = 50; R = 200; W = 6; N = 50 = 666.

We need to look no further to see whom John was writing about in the Book of Revelation. The early Christians believed Nero was the antichrist spoken about by Paul (2 Thessalonians 2:4). Nero came to power in 54 AD and ruled for 14 years. After the fire of Rome in 64 AD, Nero had hundreds of thousands of Christians and Jews extensively tortured and executed. When Jesus warned the Apostles about terrible things that were about to happen in Judea in Matthew 24:15 to 21, he was referring to the time when the persecution of Jews and Christians would be at its peak – during the time of Nero.

The warnings spoken by Jesus could not have been warnings for this generation because Israel is not called Judea; it would not matter in this day and age if they did have to flee in the winter; there would be no alas for pregnant or nursing mothers because nowadays they could travel by car and not on donkeys; the modern Israeli people would still drive on the Sabbath Day if they had to, which they could not have done 2,000 years ago and lastly, Jews do not have to flee to the mountains when they are attacked, they simply go to underground bunkers.

There was terrible tribulation for the Jews and Christians at that time. They were thrown to lions, used as human torches, tortured, burned alive and all manner of terrible things were done to them. The shortening of the days did not mean days that were ended. It was a time when the literal days were shortened from the usual 12 hours to about 6 hours of daylight because of a cosmic phenomenon and the Roman soldiers had to try to fight in the long hours of darkness, holding a shield and a torch while trying to fight with a sword. They gave up. Jesus warned believers not to follow false Messiah's and there were plenty of them around then. Nero was one the cruellest, most sadistic rulers the world has ever had. That is what Jesus and John were warning the Christian Jews about. Nero had Paul beheaded and during that time, Peter was crucified upside down. By the end of Nero's reign in 68 AD, almost all of the Apostles were dead. Praise the Lord for the dedication and bravery of these wonderful Jewish men for spreading the Gospel of the Kingdom! Truly, salvation has come from the Jews (John 4:22).

Amen and God bless you.

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