

The End Times and Last Days – “What to Expect and How to Prepare”

Lesson 25 “The Mark of the Beast”

Will it be the right hand or the Forehead?

The number 666, the mark of the Beast may be one of the most intriguing issues in all of Bible prophecy.

- There has been much speculation, sensationalism about this topic than any other in Bible prophecy.
- Many occurrences have been associated with this symbol:
 - Route 666 – the way of the Beast
 - 00666 – the zip code of the Beast
 - Phillips 666 – the gasoline of the Beast
 - LXVI – the Roman numeral of the Beast
 - 666k – the retirement plan of the Beast
 - 999 – the Australian number of the Beast
 - IAM666 – the license plate of the Beast
 - 661 – the BMW of the Beast

So, questions about this mark are numerous:

1. What is it?
2. When will it be fulfilled?
3. What is the purpose of it?
4. Does it have connection with modern technology?

Is the Mark Past or Future?

What is the time period of this mark, is it in the past or to be seen in the future?

1. The Preterist view [past] of the book of Revelation believe the Roman Caesar Nero was the Beast.
They hold that the mark of the Beast was completely fulfilled during his reign of AD 54-68.
They also hold that most prophecies of Revelation and the N.T. were fulfilled during the Jewish War – AD 66-70 with the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD.
For the Preterist, the Beast is not future; he is already come and gone from the scene of history defeated by Jesus.

Arguments against Nero being the Beast:

1. The Book of Revelation was written in AD 95, thirty years after the reign of Nero was over.
Revelation being prophetic in nature means it could not be Nero.

2. Inconsistent interpretations of the Preterists believe the 42-month reign of the Beast is literal, yet all the other number events of the Book of Revelation are to be taken symbolically.
3. Nero never fulfilled the numerous statements of Rev. 13 about the Beast:
 - The Beast would be worshiped by the entire world – Rev. 13:8
 - All humanity will be forced to take sides – Rev. 13:15
 - The mark will be taken on the right hand or forehead to enable commerce.
 - The image of the Beast will be erected by the false prophet with all the world worshipping it.
 - The Beast of Rev. 13:1-10 will have an associate, the false prophet who will call fire from heaven & gives breath to the image – Rev. 13:11-18.

None of these prophecies were fulfilled by Nero.

What is the Mark of the Beast?

Rev. 13:16-18 is the Biblical key that opens the door to the meaning of 666, the mark of the Beast, the coming one world economy:

“He required everyone—small and great, rich and poor, free and slave—to be given a mark on the right hand or on the forehead. ¹⁷ And no one could buy or sell anything without that mark, which was either the name of the beast or the number representing his name.

¹⁸ Wisdom is needed here. Let the one with understanding solve the meaning of the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man. His number is 666.”

What is the Mark of the Beast?

Rev. 13:16-18 is the Biblical key that opens the door to the meaning of 666, the mark of the Beast, the coming one world economy:

“He required everyone—small and great, rich and poor, free and slave—to be given a mark on the right hand or on the forehead. ¹⁷ And no one could buy or sell anything without that mark, which was either the name of the beast or the number representing his name.

¹⁸ Wisdom is needed here. Let the one with understanding solve the meaning of the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man. His number is 666.”

- During the Great Tribulation, the false prophet, who is the religious propaganda machine for the Beast, will head up the campaign to worship the Beast – Rev. 13:11-18
“Then I saw another beast come up out of the earth. He had two horns like those of a lamb, but he spoke with the voice of a dragon. ¹² He exercised all the authority of the first beast. And he required all the earth and its people to worship the first beast, whose fatal wound had been healed. ¹³ He did astounding miracles, even making fire flash

down to earth from the sky while everyone was watching.¹⁴ And with all the miracles he was allowed to perform on behalf of the first beast, he deceived all the people who belong to this world. He ordered the people to make a great statue of the first beast, who was fatally wounded and then came back to life.¹⁵ He was then permitted to give life to this statue so that it could speak. Then the statue of the beast commanded that anyone refusing to worship it must die.¹⁶ He required everyone—small and great, rich and poor, free and slave—to be given a mark on the right hand or on the forehead.¹⁷ And no one could buy or sell anything without that mark, which was either the name of the beast or the number representing his name.¹⁸ Wisdom is needed here. Let the one with understanding solve the meaning of the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man. His number is 666.”

- The mark is for the purpose of forcing people to declare their allegiance to the Anti-Christ or to Jesus Christ!
- It will be impossible to be neutral or undecided.
- Those not receiving the mark will be killed – Rev. 20:4 “Then I saw thrones, and the people sitting on them had been given the authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their testimony about Jesus and for proclaiming the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his statue, nor accepted his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They all came to life again, and they reigned with Christ for a thousand years.”
- It will be a mark of loyalty and devotion to the Beast, on either the right hand or the forehead.

So, what is this mark?

“Mark” appears throughout the Bible.

EX: Leviticus is a reference to a mark that renders the subject ceremonially unclean, usually related to leprosy. It is an external mark and visible.

Ezek. 9:4 uses “mark” similarly to how Revelation uses it:

“He said to him, “Walk through the streets of Jerusalem and put a mark on the foreheads of all who weep and sigh because of the detestable sins being committed in their city.”

- Here is the mark represented the “righteous” similar to the blood on the doorposts of the houses of Israel in Egypt before the death angel passed.
- In Ezek. the mark was visible on the forehead.

The Greek for “mark” or “sign” *charagma*, used 8 times, and Revelation contains 7 or those eight and refer to the Beast:

Rev. 13:6, 17: “He required everyone—small and great, rich and poor, free and slave—to be given a mark on the right hand or on the forehead. ¹⁷ And no one could buy or sell anything without that mark, which was either the name of the beast or the number.”

Rev. 14:9, 11: “Then a third angel followed them, shouting, “Anyone who worships the beast and his statue or who accepts his mark on the forehead or on the hand ¹⁰ must drink the wine of God’s anger. It has been poured full strength into God’s cup of wrath. And they will be tormented with fire and burning sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and the Lamb. ¹¹ The smoke of their torment will rise forever and ever, and they will have no relief day or night, for they have worshiped the beast and his statue and have accepted the mark of his name.”

Rev 16:2; “So, the first angel left the Temple and poured out his bowl on the earth, and horrible, malignant sores broke out on everyone who had the mark of the beast and who worshiped his statue.”

Rev 19:20 “And the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who did mighty miracles on behalf of the beast—miracles that deceived all who had accepted the mark of the beast and who worshiped his statue. Both the beast and his false prophet were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning.”

Rev 20:4 “Then I saw thrones, and the people sitting on them had been given the authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their testimony about Jesus and for proclaiming the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his statue, nor accepted his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They all came to life again, and they reigned with Christ for a thousand years.”

The Greek word means “a mark, stamp engraved, etched, branded, cut, imprinted.”

Robert Thomas, from his Rev. 8-12, Exegetical Commentary, Chicago, Moody 1991, pp 179-180 gives history on how marks or brands were used to identify in ancient times:

“The mark is some sort of branding similar to that given to soldiers, slaves, and temple devotees in John [the Revelator] days. In Asia Minor, devotees of pagan religions delighted in the display of such a tattoo as an emblem of ownership by a certain god. in Egypt, Ptolemy Philopator I branded Jews, who submitted to registration, with an ivy leaf in recognition of their Dionysian worship. The meaning resembles the long-time practice of carrying sign to advertise religious loyalties and follows the habit of branding slaves with the name or special mark of their owners. Charagma – Mark, was a term for the image or names of emperors of Roman coins, so it fittingly could apply to the beast’s emblem put on people.”

The question for each person alive during the Tribulation will be –

- Will they swear allegiance to the man who claims to be god?
- Will they give up ownership of their life to him by taking his mark, or will they bow the knee to the true God and lose their right to buy or sell while also risking beheading?

Taking the mark will be a spiritual decision: the economic benefits will be secondary to this decision every person will face.

What is the Significance of the number 666?

There are many explanations of what 666 means.

One of the best processes is by understanding the term “*gematria*” which refers to the numerical indication of names.

- In gematria, a numerical value is attributed to each of the letters of the alphabet.
- To find the numerical total of a word or name, you add together the numerical value of each of its letters.
- Rev. 13, some kind of numerical value for the Beast’s name is intended since the one wit wisdom is to “calculate” or “count the number.”
- To count the number of a name means simply adding up the numbers attached to all the letters in the name.

Hebrew, Latin, Greek and English all have numerical values for each letter in its alphabet.

- Hebrew language has 22 letters assigned numerical values: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90, 100, 200, 300, 400.
- Rev. 13:16-18 provides five clues aiding in interpreting the mark of the Beast and the support the use of gematria.

Progression of the phrases in the passage:

1. The name of the Beast
2. The number representing his name
3. The number of the Beast
4. The number of a man
5. The number 666

When these five clues are traced through their progression, the mark of the Beast equals the number of a man who is the Anti-Christ, for his own name is 666.

So, according to this calculation, whatever the personal name of the Antichrist will be, if his name is spelled out in Hebrew characters, the numerical value of his name will be 666.

- This number as a mark is what will be placed on the followers of the Anti-Christ to identify them.
- Because a number of different calculations can equal 666, it is now impossible to figure out the name in advance.
- The Anti-Christ will not be unveiled until the beginning of the Tribulation period of or Day of the Lord – 2Thess 2:2-3 “Don’t be so easily shaken or alarmed by those who say that the day of the Lord has already begun. Don’t believe them, even if they claim to have had a spiritual vision, a revelation, or a letter supposedly from us. ³ Don’t be fooled by what they say. For that day will not come until there is a great rebellion against God and the man of lawlessness is revealed—the one who brings destruction.”
- At that time people will be able to identify him because the number of his name will be 666 – Rev. 13:18.

Why 666?

Remembering that man was created on the 6th day of Creation, that is man's number. It is one short of seven, which is the number for God for perfection or completeness.

M.R. DeHann, founder of the Radio Bible Class offers this position:

“Six is the number of man. Three is the number of Divinity. Here is the interpretation. The Beast will be a man who claims to be God. three sixes imply that he is a false god and a deceiver, but he is nevertheless merely a man, regardless of his claims. Seven is the number of divine perfection, and 666 is one numeral short of seven. This man of sin will reach the highest peak of power and wisdom, but he will still be merely a man.

The number 666 is God's way of demonstrating that the Anti-Christ, satan's masterpiece, is a fallen man who is completely under the sovereign control of the great God of the ages.

What is the purpose of the Mark?

Two main purposes:

1. The mark will visibly indicated devotion to the Anti-Christ.
 - It will be etched or imprinted in the right hand or on the forehead of those who bow their knees to his iron fist.
 - It will be the satanic counterfeit of the seal of God on the foreheads of the saints – Rev. 7:3 “Wait! Don't harm the land or the sea or the trees until we have placed the seal of God on the foreheads of his servants.”
 - It will be another mimicking sign of satan to immolate God's works.
 - It will be a pledge of global allegiance, buying into satan's platform, ideology, and purpose.
 - It will not be an “accidental act” but a deliberate choice, know they are aligning with the Anti-Christ and his agenda.
2. The mark will provide economic benefits:
 - It will be required to make commercial transactions during the later half of the Tribulation – Rev. 13:17.
 - It will be a global process making it impossible for anyone outside of the system to function.
 - It will be a visible economic passport that is literal and visible.

Every tyrant in history has dreamed of ways to totally control civilization for his purposes where he alone can decide who can function only with his approval.

During the Tribulation, every person will have to decide whether they will bow and take the mark or stand and face death.

Taking the mark will be unpardonable and seal the eternal fate of those who take it:

Rev. 14:9-11 ⁹ Then a third angel followed them, shouting, “Anyone who worships the beast and his statue or who accepts his mark on the forehead or on the hand ¹⁰ must drink the wine of God’s anger. It has been poured full strength into God’s cup of wrath. And they will be tormented with fire and burning sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and the Lamb. ¹¹ The smoke of their torment will rise forever and ever, and they will have no relief day or night, for they have worshiped the beast and his statue and have accepted the mark of his name.”

Does Modern Technology Relate To The Mark Of The Beast?

What form will the mark take; the speculation is endless!

- Some say it is as simple as a tattoo!
- A chip placed under the skin containing all the information on you that can be scanned!
- An ID card!
- A bar code implanted in the hand or forehead!
- Related to the Social Security number!
- Retina [eye] scanning technique!

We don’t know for sure, but what we are seeing in modern technology already in use gives us some clues how it would be used and very workable for convenience sake.

- A bar code implanted in the hand or forehead!
- Related to the Social Security number!
- Retina [eye] scanning technique!

We don’t know for sure, but what we are seeing in modern technology already in use gives us some clues how it would be used and very workable for convenience sake.

Ten Keys to Understanding the Mark of the Beast

1. The mark is future, not past- at the beginning of the Tribulation period.
2. The mark is literal, visible brand, mark, or tattoo.
3. It will be place “upon” the right hand or forehead of people during the Tribulation.
4. The mark will be given as a sign of devotion to the Anti-Christ and as a passport to engage in commerce.
5. The mark will be the number 666, which will be the numerical value of the Anti-Christ’s name.
6. Believers during the Tribulation will be able to calculate the number and identify the Anti-Christ.
7. Those who take the mark will be eternally doomed.
8. Before the Rapture, no one should attempt to identify the Anti-Christ or his mark – the number 666.

9. While current technology and methods of identifying and locating people strikingly foreshadow the Antichrist's ability to control the world, no specific, modern technology should be identified as the mark of the Beast. No one can say specifically what technology will be employed to fulfill this prophecy, but what we see today makes such a system not only possible, but probable.
10. In spite of its association with evil, 666 will be received by those who willfully reject Christ during the Tribulation.