

The Mark and the Number of the Beast

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One of the most mysterious and highly speculated upon subjects in the Bible—none of which would top the subject— is the mark of the beast. When you think about that subject, more volumes have been written about that subject in not only books but in commentaries, articles, and sermons given. Even Hollywood movies have been inspired by this subject. It's a subject where there have been a tremendous number of different opinions and speculations about the subject. Throughout my time in the church of God, there has always been a certain amount of interest in it. Particularly over the last couple of years as we've watched a lot of national governments across the world become a whole lot more authoritarian in controlling their population and in how they choose to govern. There's a lot more interest and speculation about the end times coming and if this is so, what is the "mark of the beast" and how do we avoid this mark? That has always been a subject that people like to kick around some ideas about.

Today we are going to look at that subject and we're going to see what the Bible has to say. If you would like a title, it's:

The Mark and the Number of the Beast

These are both subjects that are heavily related with one another and subject to a lot of speculation. To summarize some of the speculation I've seen throughout my lifetime on the subject, the mark often gets theorized to be some type of technology. Sometimes people think it's some kind of taboo, similar to how the Nazis marked the Jews in World War II. Then later, bar codes became known and maybe it's bar codes people are marked with. Then computer technology became more popular and then it was maybe some kind of GPS chip or some kind of computer tracking chip that is implanted into people.

If you look at this subject, we have to consider a number of angles and how the Bible talks about this, and even how God Himself uses this particular mark. What we're going to see is, we have to consider that maybe it's a spiritual concept and not something dictated by technology. So, let's look at this subject from a number of angles and see what the Bible itself has to say about this subject.

We're going to begin in Revelation 13 because that's where we see the mark and the number directly mentioned, and some explanation given of them. To understand how to properly apply this concept of the mark and the number of the beast, we first need to understand the overview of the chapter in which we find these mentioned and all that is going on. I think the context is very important. As we're going to see in Revelation 13, the chapter is broken into halves. If you have a New King James Version like I have, you'll see with the subheadings that they break the chapter into two different segments. The reason being, as we'll see, there are two different beasts that are described in this chapter. It tells us that they each work in conjunction with the other but it makes a distinction between them. We need to understand the

imagery of these two and have a thorough grasp of that to know how to properly interpret the mark and the number of the beast. We will begin by looking at the first beast described in this chapter.

Revelation 13:1 *Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name.*

2) *Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority. (NKJV)*

We're going to notice that that's an important point—the dragon is who gives them their authority and their power. We're going to see later directly what the Bible says the dragon is.

3) *And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marveled and followed the beast.*

4) *So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, [the dragon gives its authority] saying, "Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?"*

5) *And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months.*

6) *Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven.*

7) *It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation.*

8) *All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*

9) *If anyone has an ear, let him hear.*

10) *He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity; he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints. (NKJV)*

As I mentioned, we're going to see there are two beasts described in this chapter and we just addressed one of them. What I would also like you to see, as we read through this, there are obviously aspects of the description we just read that are specific to the end time. But we also need to realize that there are aspects of what is described here that cover a much broader span of world history than just specifically the end time. Notice how I mentioned that when it gets into "What is the mark and what is the number", the speculation around that often depends on the technology offered at the time that the speculation is being done. Sometimes it was some kind of tattoo. Then no, it was a bar code because bar codes came into existence. Then today it's maybe a computer chip or something of that nature. What that does is focus the interpretation specifically at just the end time, but we need to realize that the context is addressing a lot more than that. To see that, notice again the description given in the first few verses and we're going to see what this tells us.

Revelation 13:1 *Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name.*

2) Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority. (NKJV)

Let's notice that the dragon is the one who is behind them. That is going to become important in a moment. Notice this description—ten horns and then like a lion, a bear, a leopard—this description tells us that what is described in Daniel 7 is included in this complication picture we have. That gives us the key to look at this as much broader than just specifically the end time. Turn to Daniel 7 and see how that description we're given in Revelation 13 matches what Daniel sees in Daniel 7. This gives a broader picture than just the end time.

Daniel 7:1 *In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream and visions of his head while on his bed. Then he wrote down the dream, telling the main facts.*

2) Daniel spoke, saying, "I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the Great Sea.

3) And four great beasts came up from the sea, each different from the other.

4) The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings. I watched till its wings were plucked off; and it was lifted up from the earth and made to stand on two feet like a man, and a man's heart was given to it.

5) "And suddenly another beast, a second, like a bear. It was raised up on one side, and had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. And they said thus to it: 'Arise, devour much flesh!'

6) "After this I looked, and there was another, like a leopard, which had on its back four wings of a bird. The beast also had four heads, and dominion was given to it.

7) After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, exceedingly strong. It had huge iron teeth; it was devouring, breaking in pieces, and trampling the residue with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns. (NKJV)

Notice how this description so closely matches what we saw at the beginning of Revelation 13. Obviously, what we're seeing in Revelation 13 includes all that Daniel is seeing. To understand how to interpret what we read here in the first several verses of Daniel 7, all we have to do is let Daniel 7 interpret itself. In verse 15 we see what this is picturing.

15) "I, Daniel, was grieved in my spirit within my body, and the visions of my head troubled me.

16) I came near to one of those who stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of these things: (NKJV)

The Bible is about to interpret for us what is being pictured here.

17) Those great beasts, which are four, are four kings which arise out of the earth. (NKJV)

In other words, what we are seeing is that these picture a number of world-dominating empires that are going to take place throughout history; that's what Daniel is being shown here. Realize the time frame, this is back before the time of Christ and in the Old Testament, when Daniel was seeing this. If we put this together with Daniel 2, you see that the first image is Nebuchadnezzar's empire that existed at the time Daniel is receiving this. What we're going to see is that we have a huge section of world history that is included in this. It's not just the very end time, right before Christ returns, because the image that we see in Revelation 13 is including all that is pictured here. So, we have this huge swath of human history—world history—that is involved in all of this. We need to consider that when we look at the mark of the beast, maybe it's something that has a broader application than just something that happens at the very end time.

Also notice that as we read that description through in Revelation 13, in those first two verses, one of the things pointed out in the imagery, was this beast with seven heads and ten horns. It said that it is the dragon who gave it its power and authority. Now let's notice how that dragon is described. In Revelation 12 we see very similar imagery attributed to the dragon itself and then it's going to tell us exactly who the dragon is. We don't have to speculate about that at all.

Revelation 12:3 *And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having [notice this] seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads.*

4) His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born. (NKJV)

In verse 7 the Bible is going to tell us exactly who the dragon is—we don't have to speculate.

7) And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought,

8) but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer.

9) So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. (NKJV)

This directly tells us that the dragon is Satan. We don't have to guess at all. Obviously, it's Satan who gives this beast power—this succession of world ruling empires, that are following him—he is giving them their power and authority. Notice also this imagery of seven heads and ten horns is directly attributed to Satan as well. Satan has affected mankind since the Garden of Eden and going forward, that is going to be an important concept when we look at how the mark of the beast is applied. We need to see this broader perspective and not myopically at just the end time.

Now let's go back to Revelation 13 and look at the second beast that is described here.

Revelation 13:11 *Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon.*

12) And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. (NKJV)

These two beasts work in conjunction with each other.

13) He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men.

14) And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived.

15) He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed.

16) He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads,

17) and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

18) Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666. (NKJV)

Notice it's the second beast that causes people to accept this mark and number. That is a significant point as well. These beasts work in conjunction with each other; they work together throughout human history. Realize, it's the second one that actually causes people to accept this mark. We've already seen that the first beast is a succession of political empires; world dominating empires is what that is referring to. If we focus on what we see in verse 11, it gives us a good clue about what the second beast is.

11) Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon. (NKJV)

We've already seen from the Bible exactly who the dragon is. We know it speaks like Satan because the Bible uses a dragon as imagery to describe Satan. To understand the Lamb reference, turn to John 1:29.

John 1:29 *The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!*

30) This is He of whom I said, 'After me comes a Man who is preferred before me, for He was before me.'

31) I did not know Him; but that He should be revealed to Israel, therefore I came baptizing with water."

32) And John bore witness, saying, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him.

33) I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.'

- 34) *And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God.*
35) *Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples.*
36) *And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God!"*
(NKJV)

Notice Christ Himself is described as the Lamb of God. If we put this together, we see that this beast has the appearance of the Lamb, but he speaks like the dragon. So what do we have? He has the appearance of Christ but speaks like Satan. What we are seeing is a religious system. What is described is world ruling political empires but there is also a false religious system that works in conjunction with them. We also need to consider, as we look at this, the image that we saw in Revelation 13 — of the seven heads and all the different animals that are connected with this — when we combine that with Daniel 7. This at least goes back to Nebuchadnezzar's time up to the very end because we know that's what is included. Sometimes we look at the false religious system and think that's just Catholicism and the break off groups of Catholicism. But wait, if all of this includes all the way back, to at least Nebuchadnezzar's time, was Catholicism in existence then? No—there wasn't a Catholic church then but there was a false religious system that was going through all these other empires. We need to look at this a little more broadly that it's major false religion inspired by Satan and not just always specifically one particular version of that. It's important to realize that distinction.

We also need to consider that the mark of the beast is something the Bible tells us that God utilizes as well. That's an important clue to understand what this mark is. We have already read that the beast is going to utilize this mark to do what I like to jokingly refer to as cancel culture on steroids. Today, in our modern-day culture you hear this term "cancel culture" and what it's referring to are individuals who speak out online platforms like YouTube or other things online, but they are basically questioning a narrative that is being pushed, whether it's by government or popular culture, and then they are censored and attacked and they try to de-platform them and shut them up and so punish them for not going along with a particular narrative. What we are seeing in Revelation 13 description of what the end time beast will do, it's kind of "cancel culture on steroids". Instead of just de-platforming people and trying to stop their voice, it's more like, we'll just stop you from buying and selling and shut down your life and do it financially. That's essentially what they're doing in all of this.

We need to consider the speculation around what the mark is. It often gets speculated around some type of technology. They are attaching it to the ability to shut off the ability to buy and sell, but that misses some important aspects about what the Bible says about this mark. One of the things I want you to get out of this sermon is separating what the Bible says about the mark versus technology that might be used to punish those who don't receive the mark. They are two separate things. We need to realize that the Bible tells us that God also uses this mark in a different way. He uses this mark to indicate who is going to be receiving His wrath and those who don't have this mark as those who are going to be in His Kingdom. Obviously, God is not using a barcode or implanting a computer chip or some other type of technology to make this distinction. It has to be a spiritual concept if God is using it that way. Let's turn to Revelation 14 and notice that the Bible directly tells us

that those who receive the mark of the beast are targeted to receive the wrath of God.

Revelation 14:9 Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand,

10) he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.

11) And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name." (NKJV)

We have it clearly stated here, as an angel telling us that God looks at those who have received the mark of the beast are going to receive God's wrath. We're going to see later that even during the Day of the Lord those who don't receive the mark get protected from God's wrath. We can also see from the Bible that He describes those who make it into His Kingdom as those who refuse to receive the mark. This alone tells us that it can't be some physical technology as to what the mark is. To see what I'm talking about turn to Revelation 20:4.

Revelation 20:4 *And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. (NKJV)*

It's referring to the resurrected Firstfruits who reigned with Christ for 1000 years and how are they described? They are described as those who refused to receive the mark of the beast. This alone tells us that it can't be something just specific to the end time because who are the Firstfruits? The resurrection of the Firstfruits is going to include everybody from the Garden of Eden up until the time Christ returns who are offered salvation and successfully endured to the end, remained faithful to God and made it into the Kingdom of God—that's all who are included and that is a lot more people than just those who lived at the very end time. So obviously we have to have an explanation for what the mark is that includes all of this.

We'll also see this same concept validated in Revelation 15 but let's start in Revelation 14 to set the context of who is being talked about in Revelation 15. I mentioned the Firstfruits themselves as a whole are referred to as those who did not receive the mark. Let's see from the Bible that that is the case.

Revelation 14:1 *Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on their foreheads.*

2) And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps.

3) They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth. (NKJV)

These are former human beings who are being described because they are being redeemed from the earth and if we read the next two verses it becomes very obvious who we are talking about.

4) These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from among men [former human beings], being first fruits to God and to the Lamb.

5) And in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are without fault before the throne of God. (NKJV)

If you just look at the timeline of events throughout the book of Revelation, in Revelation 11 you have the blowing of the seventh trumpet taking place. We know in 1 Corinthians 15 and 1 Thessalonians 4 that is when the resurrection to eternal life happens for all the first fruits. This is obviously in between, and I say in between because in Revelation 11 you have the resurrection taking place, Revelation 19 you have Christ on a white horse coming down to fight the final battle. Obviously, there are events taking place in between. What you have here are the Firstfruits being described in heaven, already resurrected and turned into God beings, before the throne of God. With that in mind let's go to chapter 15 and pick up the story and notice how this same group is described.

Revelation 15:1 *Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous: seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them the wrath of God is complete.*

2) And I saw something like a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who have the victory over the beast, over his image and over his mark and over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having harps of God. (NKJV)

The next couple of verses talk about this group singing before God's throne. But we don't have to guess who we are talking about because the beginning of chapter 14 told us who we are talking about. These are the resurrected Firstfruits, they are in heaven before God's throne and are basically preparing for their job to come back down to earth later to start the millennium but how are this group described? They are described as a whole as those who wouldn't receive the mark of the beast. So, when you read this, you see that it's a mark that God utilizes and not just the beast. He uses it for the opposite purpose of what the beast is using this mark for, to target and persecute those who are not in line with the direction the beast is wanting to go. God is looking at it from the opposite perspective of, those who receive this mark are going to receive the wrath of God because they were rebellious to God. Those who make into the Kingdom of God are those who refused to accept the mark.

This alone tells us that the explanation of what the mark is, can't be some kind of technology. It can't be some kind of bar code put on you or a computer chip put in you because it doesn't make any sense that God will determine who makes it into

His Kingdom on that basis. Think that through; often what happens is—and all of my life I've heard this speculation—the explanation for what the mark of the beast is somehow tied directly into how to shut off someone's ability to buy and sell. It becomes defined as some type of technology. Think that one through. If it's some kind of technology and if you're smart and see it coming and think, if everyone is getting that computer chip and it's the mark of the beast then I'm going to find some way to avoid that and I won't get that chip. Does that mean you're going to make it into the Kingdom of God because somehow you outsmarted that and worked around the technology? No. Does that mean God is going to say, that person has been obedient and won't receive my wrath because they were smart and avoided getting the computer chip implanted into them? Does that make any sense? No, obviously it has to be a spiritual issue to be utilized in this way. I think that's a very important thing to understand. As we see our world today—if you have been paying attention over the last few years to what has been going on in this country and others—you see way more authoritarian control coming about and this growing concept of what is referred to today, as “cancel culture”. Where someone who is not in line with the popular narratives being persecuted being de-platformed, being attacked, their name maligned, censored and basically that same concept developing. This is why I like to refer to what will ultimately happen in Revelation 13 is “cancel culture on steroids”. That's basically what it is; the extreme version of what we are seeing developing in our culture today.

But let's not confuse any technology that might be used to punish people who are not in line with the beast with what the mark actually is. If we are relying upon the Bible the mark has to be a spiritual issue. If you notice what we see when we read through Revelation 13, is that it talks about the mark as on the forehead and on the hand. The right hand and the forehead. If we rely upon scripture to know how to interpret that, we are going to see that God has a mark as well. Where do we find it? On the forehead and on the hand; it does the same thing, just in the opposite side of the same coin. Let's notice a few scriptures that talk about that. Revelation 7:1.

Revelation 7:1 *After these things I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree.*

2) Then I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God. And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea,

3) saying, “Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads.” (NKJV)

I won't take the time to read the next several verses but you'll see those beings being described are the 144,000. As we've already read from Revelation 14, we know who this is; it describes the Firstfruits. What does it say, how does God mark them? On their foreheads. Back to Revelation 14, where we read these verses just a moment ago but I want you to make particular note about what's stated in verse 1 because it matches what we just read.

Revelation 14:1 *Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on their foreheads. (NKJV)*

Where are they marked? Foreheads. What we're going to see are a number of scriptures about how God marks them—their foreheads and their hands, and what that means as we go forward. Look again at Revelation 9 and we will read part of the verses that describe the fifth trumpet which is part of the Day of the Lord which is by definition is God's wrath upon rebellious mankind. Notice who is protected from this plague and how they are marked.

Revelation 9:1 *Then the fifth angel sounded: And I saw a star fallen from heaven to the earth. To him was given the key to the bottomless pit.*
2) *And he opened the bottomless pit, and smoke arose out of the pit like the smoke of a great furnace. So the sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke of the pit.*
3) *Then out of the smoke locusts came upon the earth. And to them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.*
4) *They were commanded not to harm the grass of the earth, or any green thing, or any tree, but only those men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads.*
5) *And they were not given authority to kill them, but to torment them for five months. Their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it strikes a man.*
6) *In those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will desire to die, and death will flee from them. (NKJV)*

We have a plague of the Day of the Lord but who is excluded from it? Those who have the seal of God. Where is that seal? On the forehead. You're seeing a very similar concept of how this is marked. If we look at how the Old Testament talks about some of this, we'll also see examples where God told ancient Israel to have His commandments, His laws, His holy days, His whole way of life, telling them two places He wants them to put it; their forehead and their right hand. We're going to see what this means. In Exodus 13, we're going to break into the middle of context speaking specifically about keeping of the Days of the Unleavened Bread and what it's about, but pick up in verse 6.

Exodus 13:6 *Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day there shall be a feast to the LORD.*
7) *Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days. And no leavened bread shall be seen among you, nor shall leaven be seen among you in all your quarters.*
8) *And you shall tell your son in that day, saying, 'This is done because of what the LORD did for me when I came up from Egypt.'*
9) *It shall be as a sign to you on your hand and as a memorial between your eyes, that the LORD's law may be in your mouth; for with a strong hand the LORD has brought you out of Egypt.*
10) *You shall therefore keep this ordinance in its season from year to year. (NKJV)*

Notice what He is telling them. I want you to do this, something I want you to practice and teach your children to do and where does He tell them to put it? On their right hand and their forehead. If we think about it, it's obvious what He is saying. It's symbolic to your actions and your thoughts. In other words, I want this to be in your heart, I want you to live this and practice this in your life and I want it to be a part of your actions and how you behave and how you think. You'll see this multiple times mentioned throughout the Old Testament and not just specific to the Holy Days but God's laws as a whole. He's telling them, this is what I want you to do with this; practice this and be a part of your day-to-day life and how you live. Turn to Deuteronomy 6:1.

Deuteronomy 6:1 *Now this is the commandment, and these are the statutes and judgments which the LORD your God has commanded to teach you, that you may observe them in the land which you are crossing over to possess,*

2) that you may fear the LORD your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments which I command you, you and your son and your grandson, all the days of your life, and that your days may be prolonged.

3) Therefore hear, O Israel, and be careful to observe it, that it may be well with you, and that you may multiply greatly as the LORD God of your fathers has promised you—a land flowing with milk and honey.'

4) "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one!

5) You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.

6) And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart.

7) You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.

8) You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. (NKJV)

Frontlets between your eyes and forehead. Put it on your forehead and your hand. Obviously, a reference to your actions and your thoughts. In other words, internalize this, make it a part of your heart, make it a part of how you live your life; that is what He is telling them to do.

Notice another reference in Deuteronomy 11:16.

Deuteronomy 11:16 *Take heed to yourselves, lest your heart be deceived, and you turn aside and serve other gods and worship them,*

17) lest the LORD's anger be aroused against you, and He shut up the heavens so that there be no rain, and the land yield no produce, and you perish quickly from the good land which the LORD is giving you.

18) Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul, and bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes.

19) You shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.

*20) And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates,
21) that your days and the days of your children may be multiplied in the land of which the LORD swore to your fathers to give them, like the days of the heavens above the earth. (NKJV)*

We see a very clear picture. If we just let the Bible interpret itself, we see a clear picture that God has a sign just like the beast has a sign. That is basically on the forehead and the hand and what it's referring to is not some kind of tattoo, some bar code or implanted computer chip, it's simply how you live. Having the mark of God is having God's laws and His way of life, something we practice every day in our lives—part of our actions and thoughts in our heart and how we live—or we can follow Satan's way and have the mark of the beast, we can have that way of sin and our actions and thoughts and how we live. The mark of the beast has nothing to do with technology. It's a spiritual issue and simply how we live. If you want to avoid the mark of the beast—"How do I make sure I don't get the mark of the beast?" Simply live a life of obedience to God. It's literally that simple. If you reject Satan's way and follow God diligently in your life, that is how you can avoid the mark of the beast. It has nothing to do with technology or how they might punish those who are not in line with the beast—that's a separate issue. I'm not saying we don't try to be wise in how we live our lives to protect ourselves from an authoritarian government of forces who wants to force their will on you. I'm not saying don't try to be wise in how you live your life in that regard, but don't confuse that with saying, "If I say the mark of the beast is this particular technology or this particular chip and as long as I avoid that, I didn't get the mark of the beast." That's not true. God doesn't decide who makes it into His Kingdom and who is or isn't included in receiving His wrath based on whether you outsmart technology or not. He bases it on our hearts and how we live and if we're living a life of obedience to Him. That is the most important thing I want you to get out of this sermon. Don't ever confuse any technology that might be used to punish those who are not in line with the narrative that the beast wants to push with the mark of the beast because they are two separate issues. God is never going to determine who receive His wrath and who doesn't and who makes it into His Kingdom and who doesn't based on some human technology; that is not how that is ever going to work.

Now let's ask a question, what is the number of the beast? How does that fit into this whole picture? Back to Revelation 13 and we will look at some more on that subject. What we're going to find is this has a very simple explanation, very in line with what we've covered.

Revelation 13:16 *He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads,
17) and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.
18) Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666. (NKJV)*

If you have ever looked at this subject at all, you're probably aware there is a tremendous amount of speculation that is done to explain this number. It's often a lot of mental gymnastics and what I like to refer to as "reverse engineering". What

happens is, people take this approach that they would not apply to any other number in the Bible at any other time. It becomes very numerology related deal where they take this in various languages—that's where it gets interesting, they choose whatever language they want to use to pull the numerical values from—then they take some political leader or some other empire and take words associated with it and choose whatever language is going to work for their argument. If we take these letters, they also have this numerical value and we can put them together and then add them up and see if it adds up to 666. Again, this is what I love to call “mental gymnastics” and why I say this.

Personally, if you look at what language the book of Revelation was originally written in, I would argue it was written in Hebrew. Because of the author and culture and the fact that there have been Hebrew manuscripts that have been found. What actually has been preserved the most are the Greek manuscripts of the book. In fact, most of our current English translations are based on Greek manuscripts and many would argue that it was originally written in Greek. Whichever language you want to go to really doesn't matter. The reason I say that is because when you see this numerology approach, what seems to always happens is, they don't go back to using the Greek or Hebrew letters and try to make this numerical formula out of it. They go to some other language whether it's English or some other language and say, if we take the English letters and give them their Roman numeral values to them and we do this complicated calculation, we can come with 666. What this is, is reverse engineering and argument. You start off with the conclusion you want to come to and massage your methodology of how you do it enough to get it to work and come up with what you want to come up with in the end.

One of the other big red flags in all of this is, the fact that the same people who would make these complicated arguments typically wouldn't use that approach with any other number in the Bible under any other context. It's completely out of line with every typical biblical methodology.

A lot of where the confusion comes with this is based upon the word *calculate* that is used in Revelation 13:18. They think you have to *calculate* the number of the beast so that means we're going to have some complicated mathematical formula that's going to take us to what the answer is. The Greek word that's used, while it can have the meaning of “calculate”, it can also just have the meaning of “figure out”. The Greek word that it is transliterated into English as *psephizo* [Strong's #5585](#) and the definition I'm going to give you is from [The Complete Word Study Dictionary of the New Testament](#) by Spiros Zodhiates. He defines it as “to reckon, compute, calculate, figure out”. It certainly can mean “to calculate like you're doing a mathematical formula” but it can also just mean “to figure out”. To give a quick biblical example of how this word is used that way look at Luke 14:28.

Luke 14:28 *For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost [that's the same word], whether he has enough to finish it—*

29) lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him ... (NKJV)

Basically, what that is saying is “count the cost”; it doesn’t mean do this numerology, cryptic formula and this complicated calculation. No, it means think about it and ask if it makes sense. Considering that, let’s look at Revelation 13:18 and consider a much more simplistic explanation that is much more straight forward.

Revelation 13:18 *Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666.*
(NKJV)

Let’s consider that it is the number of man that we’re talking about. As I mentioned, if you stick with consistent biblical interpretation methodology, you don’t usually ever find anywhere else in the Bible where people use that numerology, numerical approach of jumping languages and things of that nature. That’s completely inconsistent. What you will find in the Bible is numbers having a theme to them—a constant theme. An easy example is the number seven being the number for completeness. The Sabbath is the seventh day of the week and God rests there and seven days of creation. We look at the Holy Days, there are seven annual Holy Days. We even look at the Day of the Lord, there are seven trumpets and seven plagues with them; it’s God’s completeness in seven. The number six is very often associated with man. What we’re going to see is, what this number is getting at just to give you the spoiler alert to where this is headed, this is a symbolic number of man and rebellion against God. Man on his own and doing his own thing.

I gave you the conclusion before I walked you through it all but let’s just notice, first of all, man is created on day six of creation.

Genesis 1:26 *Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”*

27) *So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.*

28) *Then God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”*

29) *And God said, “See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food.*

30) *Also, to every beast of the earth, to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which there is life, I have given every green herb for food”; and it was so.*

31) *Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.* (NKJV)

In other words, man is made on day six, man does his work in six days. Exodus 20:8 is the Sabbath commandment but notice what is mentioned here.

Exodus 20:8 *“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.
9) Six days you shall labor and do all your work,*

10) but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. (NKJV)

Man does his work for six days. They were also to farm for six years in a row. Turn to Exodus 23:10.

Exodus 23:10 *“Six years you shall sow your land and gather in its produce, 11) but the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow, that the poor of your people may eat; and what they leave, the beasts of the field may eat. In like manner you shall do with your vineyard and your olive grove. 12) Six days you shall do your work, and on the seventh day you shall rest, that your ox and your donkey may rest, and the son of your female servant and the stranger may be refreshed. (NKJV)*

Again, we have man is created on day six, he does his work for six days and you farm for six years in a row. I'm just going to scratch the surface on the examples I could stop with this. I'm just going to use enough scripture to make the point. Notice also the dimensions used in Daniel 3. We know just from what we've already covered that the description in Revelation 13 of the beast is a complication that also includes what Daniel saw in Daniel 7 and also connects with Daniel 2 in the image that Nebuchadnezzar saw. So we know that Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon is part of this whole beast system, the Bible flat out tells us this. We also know that Nebuchadnezzar as the ruler of one of these beast powers makes an image and commands everybody to worship it. Let's notice the dimensions of that image.

Daniel 3:1 *Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was sixty cubits and its width six cubits. He set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon. (NKJV)*

We're familiar with the story, he puts up this image and tells people to worship it. This is where Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego refuse to do so and then they have the fiery furnace situation that happens. Just notice that we have an image by a beast power and what are its dimensions—sixty and six. Now let's notice an example in the Bible of acts done in rebellion to God where the number 666 comes out directly. We're going to see this in the life of King Solomon but first we have to establish a little background for it to make sense. Long before Israel had kings God gave instructions to Moses because He knew they were going to demand a king and He said, when you have a king, here are instruction that I want them to play by and how I want that king to behave when he has this role. You'll see that these instructions start in Deuteronomy 17:14.

Deuteronomy 17:14 *When you come to the land which the LORD your God is giving you, and possess it and dwell in it, and say, I will set a king over me like all the nations that are around me, ' 15) you shall surely set a king over you whom the LORD your God chooses; one from among your brethren you shall set as king over you; you may not set a foreigner over you, who is not your brother.*

16) But he shall not multiply horses for himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, for the LORD has said to you, You shall not return that way again.'

Notice in particular verse 17.

17) Neither shall he multiply wives for himself, lest his heart turn away; nor shall he greatly multiply silver and gold for himself. (NKJV)

These are things that a king was not supposed to do. We know one of the things that Solomon was famous for was multiplying wives for himself and it did exactly what this verse says—turned his heart away from God. Notice he was also not supposed to multiply gold for himself. That is another thing that a king was specifically commanded not to do. Let's notice that when Solomon violated this command, we're going to find an interesting number associated with the amount of gold he got every single year. We will look at 2 Chronicles 9:13.

2 Chronicles 9:13 *The weight of gold that came to Solomon yearly was six hundred and sixty-six talents of gold ... (NKJV)*

Interesting number—a king isn't supposed to be doing this, this is an active rebellion against God. He said kings are not supposed to stockpile gold for themselves and what is the number he is getting every year—666 of them. Let's keep reading them.

14) besides what the traveling merchants and traders brought. And all the kings of Arabia and governors of the country brought gold and silver to Solomon.

15) And King Solomon made two hundred large shields of hammered gold; six hundred shekels of hammered gold went into each shield.

16) He also made three hundred shields of hammered gold; three hundred shekels of gold went into each shield. The king put them in the House of the Forest of Lebanon.

17) Moreover the king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with pure gold.

18) The throne had six steps, with a footstool of gold, which were fastened to the throne; there were armrests on either side of the place of the seat, and two lions stood beside the armrests.

19) Twelve lions stood there, one on each side of the six steps; nothing like this had been made for any other kingdom. (NKJV)

There are numerous other examples which I could use to make this point of the number six being the number for "man". Let me also read to you a section from a commentary that was enlightening to me to start seeing this answer. It's going to refer to a number of examples that I don't have time to turn to in this summary he's going to give. This is a quote from The Exposition of Revelation of Jesus Christ by Walter Scott. This is just a lengthy quote I'm going to read.

666 is man's number. The unit six being impressed upon him at his creation and subsequent history. Man was created on the sixth day. His appointed days of labor and toil are six. The Hebrew slave was to serve six years. For

six years the land was to be sown. Under the sixth seal an appalling and universal catastrophe upon mankind ensues. As the numeral seven denotes what is perfect or complete, six being short of that signifies human imperfection and toil. But in the growing development of man's history, he goes from bad to worse, hence six combined with six increases immoral significance until man is witnessed in open and direct opposition to God. Goliath and his brother giant were men of abnormal strength and height and open enemies of God in Israel. The numeral six is stamped upon both—1 Samuel 17:4-7, 1 Chronicles 20:6. Yet further development of man in his progressive evil in history, the culmination is reached in the ominous signification of 666, the number of the beast. There is an obvious connection between the first and the last of the world powers. In character they are identical, save that the last is the worst. The image of gold set up by Nebuchadnezzar for his own glorification was sixty cubits high and six cubits broad—Daniel 3:1-30. No doubt the image of the plain of Durah was meant to consolidate and unify the numerous and diversified religions of the mighty Babylonian empire. Under threats of an awful death, the image of gold must be worshiped. Surely Daniel 30:1-30 points forward to the yet even deeper and truly satanic evil of Revelation 13:1-18. The one foreshadows the other. In both scriptures the pride, self will, and haughty independence of God by men placed above human law is the sad picture. It only remains to ask, what is the signification of the trinity of six. It is the fullest, highest development of man under direct satanic control. It is the combination of civil, religious, and political power satanically inspired. It is so far as man can do, the complete setting aside of God as the supreme ruler. A man taking His place, not in heathendom but in Palestine itself and in the wider range of Christendom. Beyond what is signified in this trinity of evil, 666, man cannot go. We here reached the height of human folly, of human pride, of human arrogance, of human unbridled will. Such we believe in the meaning of this mystic numeral, 666. It is not a conundrum to be solved by genius minds but it contains a wisdom which the spiritual in that day, as now, may understand and profit by the knowledge thereof.

The answer to the number of the beast is just like the mark of the beast. It's basically just a symbolic number indicating rebellion against God and following Satan's way. It's as simple as the mark of the beast, but again, on the *hand* and *forehead*—the *actions* and *thoughts*. We have a choice in life. Just like back in the Garden of Eden between the two trees. You can choose the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil and follow your own path inspired by Satan or the Tree of Life and follow God's way. It's basically the same story just coached in symbolic language that makes it a little harder to sort out. If we look and understand what the mark of the beast is, it's a spiritual thing and has nothing to do with physical technology, it has nothing to do with a physical mark; it is about how we live our lives. We can choose to have the mark of God on our *hands* that is *our actions*, *our foreheads* that is *our thoughts*, by having God's law and living our day-to-day lives be in obedience to Him. Or we can rebel and choose to follow Satan's way and having Satan's way in our hands—our actions—and our foreheads—our thoughts. I think that is important for us to realize.

If we pay attention to our current world today, we see the concept of "cancel culture" as a growing concept. If you are paying attention to the news, you see more and

more of the government overreach. Trying to control people's everyday lives and pushing unsavory agendas upon people. To give you an obvious example as an early foreshadowing of what we see in Revelation 13. If you remember about a year ago, (this hit the news quite a bit), there was a big protest that took place in Canada. It was the Canadian truckers who went to Ottawa and were protesting at what they saw as government overreach by the Trudeau government that was taking place at the time. Regardless of which side you may feel was correct in this dispute, that's really not important to what I'm trying to illustrate. What I would like you to see is how the government responded to it. What happened as this was coming to a head, is the government responded by invoking emergency powers, to seize bank accounts, to try and shut off their way to finance their activities and cut off their financing. It was cutting off their ability to buy and sell. They might have been able to still sell but if you cut off their bank account, they aren't going to buy too much because you don't have the funds to do it. But they are kind of going down that route. So, you can see the early warning signs of this type of approach of governments going in that direction. As you see that, let's not get confused about what the mark of the beast is and isn't.

We are going to wind up eventually in a culture with total totalitarian control like that. Where you will have "cancel culture on steroids" and anyone who is not going along with accepted narratives will be punished by having their ability to buy and sell shut off. Obviously, there will be some technological component as to how that is going to take place, whether it's through digital currency or an ESG system or however it happens, again, the technology really doesn't matter from a spiritual perspective. If you want to avoid the mark of the beast, simple live a life in obedience to God. Realize that the mark of the beast and any technology that might be utilized to harass, punish and persecute those not in line with the beast are separate issues. As we can see from the Bible, God utilizes the mark of the beast and from an opposite perspective of the beast, He uses it to determine how is going to be the recipient of His wrath and those who rejected the mark of the beast as being those who make into His Kingdom. That tells us it's a spiritual issue.

As we go forward in this scary world and see things eventually come to a culmination that Revelation tells us about, let's realize what the mark of the beast really is. If we want to avoid receiving the mark of the beast, all we have to do is diligently live a life of obedience to God.