

Title: The Mark of the Beast

Text: Rev 13: 1-18

Date: Sept 19, 2021

Place: SGBC, NJ

Rev 13: 16 And he [speaking of the second beast] causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: 17: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

In recent months I have heard several references made to Revelation 13, concerning things going on in the world today, particularly the mark of the beast. Throughout this gospel age there has been much speculation about this mark of the beast. In recent years, some have said it will be a chip embedded under the skin or a tattoo to mark people. Some now think the vaccine is the mark of the beast. But that is not new. Baby boomers have a mark on their arm from vaccines. For a time some preached that that was the mark of the beast. Brethren, no physical mark in our bodies avail or makes us cease being the Lord's people. We will see what this mark is a little later in the message.

As we look into Revelation 13, my prayer is that the Spirit of God would set our affection on Christ above and settle our hearts in faith. We can only understand the word of God by the Spirit of God revealing the truth in the inner man. May God be pleased to do so with this scripture.

Revelation is the revelation of Jesus Christ. Read this book, as we do all scripture, to behold Christ. This book, as all scripture, is given to the church. The things written in Revelation are not in chronological order. These are things that the church has experienced since Christ came forth and accomplished our redemption. Every generation has experienced the things written here and every generation shall until Christ returns. There are some things that are yet to come. And they shall come by the sovereign hand of our reigning Savior. But for the most part the things written here have been coming to pass since the beginning of these last days began when Christ came forth and redeemed his people.

In order to better understand Revelation 13, let's consider some things revealed in Revelation 12. It declares that Christ has accomplished the redemption of his people.

It reveals the woman (the church) bringing forth a man child "*who was to rule all nations.*" That man child is the Lord Jesus Christ. The dragon, satan, the devil tried to devour the child. Since the garden when God told the devil that he would bruise the heel of the woman's Seed but Christ would mortally wound the devil's head, the devil has tried to kill male Jewish children. He did so many times throughout the old testament. He did so again at Christ's birth using Herod. So the dragon is the devil who tried to destroy Christ as soon as he came forth into the earth.

Then Revelation 12 speaks of a great war between the devil and his fallen host warring with Michael the Arch Angel, who is Christ and his heavenly host. This war was waged throughout Christ's life but especially on the cross. And Christ won! The devil bruised Christ's heel but Christ mortally wounded the devil's head when he put away the sin of his people and made us the righteousness of God in him.

So Revelation 12 declares "*Her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.*" After Christ accomplished the redemption of his people the glorified GodMan arose to God's right hand. Christ won the victory over sin and death for his people and cast out the devil and his angels into the earth.

Revelation 12: 10: And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. 11: And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

God's elect are saved by the blood of the Lamb. Now is come salvation. Christ is our Strength. He is the reigning King of his kingdom. The power of God unto salvation is Christ. Christ cast down the accuser of the brethren, the devil, which accused God's elect before God day and night. But all God's elect overcame the devil by the blood of the Lamb. The Spirit of God has given us the word of testimony—the witness is within our hearts through faith. And God will not permit his saints to renounce our testimony of Christ. God gives grace so his people die in faith even if martyred—"*they loved not their lives unto death.*"

Revelation 12: 12: Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. 13: And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man *child*. [the church]...17: And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Christ has conquered the devil. But the Lord has cast him unto the earth where God has given him permission, for a short time, to make war with God's elect remnant. Yet, the devil can do nothing but what Christ permits.

So the things written in the Revelation speak of what has been happening since Christ came and accomplished redemption for his people. These things will go on until Christ returns. But none of these things shall undo the salvation Christ has accomplished for his elect nor separate us from him. Christ accomplished our warfare!

Romans 8:37: Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

Revelation 13 describes two beasts. The devil uses these two beasts. One is antichrist governments. The other is antichrist religion.

THE FIRST BEAST IS ANTICHRIST GOVERNMENT

Revelation 13: 1: And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.

William Hendriksen says this beast represents all antichristian governments throughout this gospel age—from Rome [when Christ walked this earth] unto the second coming of Christ (Rev. 11:2, 3; 12:6, 14; 13:5).

Notice, this beast *rose up out of the sea*. The sea is fallen man. Governments are made up of fallen, sinful man under the power of the devil. Antichrist is people. All reprobate men and women are anti-christ. The seven heads and ten horns and ten crowns simply declares there are many nations and many governments ruled by many rulers. The specific numbers in Revelation are not so much to give us the exact number of nations and rulers but to show us God exactly numbers them.

Revelation 17: 15: And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.

Revelation 13: 2: And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as *the feet* of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: [powerful] and the dragon [the devil] gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.

This tells us the world's governments are powerful. The devil gives antichristian governments, the men that make them up, their power and seat and great authority.

But remember God our Savior rules the devil. Romans 13 declares "the powers that be are ordained of God." Governments of men and women only accomplish what God determined before to be done.

Notice this beast has a limited number of crowns. Christ wears "*many*" crowns." There is no limit to Christ's glory and dominion over all.

Revelation 1:6:...to him *be* glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Proverbs 21:1 The king's heart *is* in the hand of the LORD, *as* the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.

Revelation 13: 3: And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. 4: And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?

The dragon is the devil. His head has been wounded unto death by Christ. His wound is not healed so that he has all power but only in so much as Christ rules him to accomplish God's sovereign purpose and salvation of his people. Governments wounded often rise again. But only by God who raises up nations and puts down nations as he will.

The devil's objective in using governments is to turn man's mind from Christ. His goal is to turn the world from unseen eternal things to temporary things of this world. Have you noticed how many news channels there are today which only speak of government and politics? People get caught up in it so its all they think about. The devil's goal is to make men worship and depend upon governments of men to save rather than Christ.

Folks are worried about a one-world government. But they are all one. They always have been. All are under the power of the devil. But God's saints are born into Christ's kingdom—his one holy nation. And Christ is our King. He is the King of all this world's kings. God keeps his saints looking to Christ above who rules the devil and all governments in the earth. Christ is King of kings and LORD of lords. He is our Salvation providing for us in this world.

Revelation 17:14: These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him *are* called, and chosen, and faithful.

Revelation 19:16: And he hath on *his* vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

Fallen sinners look to the power of governments saying, "*Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him?*" God's saints glorify God saying

Psalms 86: 8: Among the gods *there is* none like unto thee, O Lord; neither *are there any works* like unto thy works. 9: All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord; and shall glorify thy name. 10: For thou *art* great, and doest wondrous things: thou *art* God alone.

None can make war with God and win!

Revelation 13: 5: And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. 6: And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and [even] them that dwell in heaven. 7: And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. 8: And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. 9: If any man have an ear, let him hear. 10: He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

Governments blaspheme God and persecute the saints but none shall separate Christ's people from Christ. Forty-two months means God has set their time and God will end the world's rage at the set time.

Here is the good news! Before the world was made, God the Father elected his people unto salvation in Christ the Lamb. He wrote our names in the Lamb's book of life. None whose names are written in the Lamb's book shall worship any but Christ. We have been chosen as the objects of God's mercy, love, and grace. The purpose of God in election must stand. Christ shall not lose one. Not one elect child, redeemed by Christ the Lamb, shall ever be separated from Christ.

This world's government make take us captive, even kill the body with the sword. Yet they shall not harm God's children. The Spirit of God shall keep his people believing on Christ in the inner man and none shall

separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. The gifts and callings of God are without repentance (Rom. 11:29).

In the set time, Christ shall take the world and its governments captive and they shall be killed with the sword. Patiently wait and trust the Lord of glory! *Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.* We are waiting on the Lord our Redeemer, trusting the Lord of glory to rule on our behalf.

THE SECOND BEAST

Romans 13: 11: And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.

The second beast is false religion. Notice this beast comes up out of the earth. False religion is carnal, earthy. Cain offered the fruit of the cursed God. False religion attempts to come to God with the works of a cursed sinner's earthy hands.

False religion is more dangerous than the first beast because it looks harmless like a lamb. But the message it speaks is of the devil. False religion includes all false religion, even that which goes by the name of Jesus. But it is another Jesus which is false. It is antichrist religion.

There are only two religions in the world. True religion which is of God is salvation by grace of the Lord, by God's will and by God's works. He gets all the glory. False religion vainly says salvation is by man's will and works. If it gives glory to man's will and works it is false! True religion glories only in the Lord! The only two religions are the true which is salvation by grace and the false which is salvation by works.

Revelation 13: 12: And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

Anti-christ religion is one with the anti-christ world and its governments. All reprobate sinners, no matter how they appear opposed to one another, are really one in their fallen nature and their wicked purpose. Politicians love to have religious support and false religion loves to have support of politicians. They are one.

Revelation 13: 13: And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, 14: And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by *the means of* those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. 15: And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

Natural, unregenerate sinners must have signs and wonders they can see with the natural eye. So false religion produces great signs and wonders that by this means they may deceive their followers. But God's saints shall not be deceived by the signs and wonders of false religion.

Mark 13:22: For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if *it were* possible, even the elect.

Christ said that an evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign and there is no sign but Christ. As Jonah was three days and three nights in the fishes belly so was the Son of man. Now Christ is risen and his people in him. Christ and the salvation he works, both, for and in his people are "for signs and wonders"; it is the wonder of God's grace in salvation wrought by Christ.

Isa 8:18 Behold, I and the children whom the LORD hath given me *are* for signs and for wonders in Israel from the LORD of hosts, which dwelleth in mount Zion.

While the world is looking and marveling at signs below God keeps his people looking only and always to Christ above.

Colossians 3: 1: If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. 2: Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. 3: For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. 4: When Christ, *who is* our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

THE MARK OF THE BEAST

Revelation 13: 16: And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: 17: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

This began in the first days of this gospel age. Legalists insisted that believers must be circumcised in the body or they could not be saved. Since then governments and false religion have required many similar things. In one generation the Papacy forbid its followers to do business with any who did not profess allegiance to them. This mark speaks of strong delusion in men's minds which God sends so that they believe a lie and look to the work of their hands for salvation. The mark of false religion is their confidence in their will and their works. They insist that without this mark a man cannot buy or sell.

Christ speaks to his people and says, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." (Isa 55:1).

But be sure to get this: God tells us the number of the beast is man. The mark is man trusting man.

Revelation 13: 18: Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore *and* six.

It is the number of a man—6 6 6. The number six represents man in scripture. It is failure. Man was created on the 6th day. Six represents sinful, fallen man. Seven is the number of perfection representing our perfect God and Savior and his perfect Salvation. God rested on the seventh day. Christ is our Sabbath of perfect rest. But six comes short of perfection. "All have sinned and come short of the glory God."

Look at this number as three digits. 6...6...6. There are three persons in the Godhead. If a number was written representing God it would be 7...7...7. But 666 represents man giving himself the glory for the work of each person in the Godhead.

God the Father—elected and predestinated his people to salvation in Christ. Man would take the glory of God the Father preaching man's will.

God the Son—perfected forever them that are sanctified by his one offering. Man would take the glory of Christ making himself righteous and holy by his works.

God the Holy Spirit—regenerates, seals and preserves his people in Christ. Man would take the glory of the Spirit making himself be born-again and preserving himself by his self-sanctifying works

Antichrist men and women stand in the church of God attributing to themselves the glory that belongs to God alone as if they are god. There may be some man arise who claims he is god to whom the world will follow. But it seems more correct that the collective body of antichristian men and women are described as one man. And notice that he gives himself the glory that belongs to God alone.

2 Thessalonians 2: 3: Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; 4: Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

Antichristian men and women are those who sit in the temple of God showing themselves that they are god by stealing for themselves the glory of each person in the Godhead. Will-worshippers operate from the power of force. If you do not have their mark then you cannot buy or sell. This has happened and may happen again. It is persecution.

But Christ says to poor, thirsty sinners “come buy wine without money and without price.” Christ paid it all for his people. He says come unto me. Salvation is free in Christ by the great price he paid on our behalf. Christ shall protect his people so that we never renounce our testimony of Christ our Salvation!

THE MARK OF THE FATHER

Oh that people were interested in this mark as they are the mark of the beast. Here is the good news. God’s elect are also given a mark. It is the name of our heavenly Father. The Holy Spirit seals his people in our foreheads so that we have the mind of Christ knowing the things that are freely given to us of God in Christ our perfection.

Revelation 14: 1: And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty *and* four thousand, having his Father’s name written in their foreheads.

After the Spirit regenerated you to faith in Christ, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. The seal of the Holy Spirit cannot be broken but guarantees our eternal security in Christ (Eph. 1:13-14; 4:30). The seal preserves. The seal proves ownership. The seal is the earnest of our inheritance.

Our assurance and security is Christ. It is not, in any way, dependent upon or determined by us. No mark in the body secures or unsecures salvation. Our good works do not make us more secure. And our evil works do not make us less secure. Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails but Christ making us a new creation. (Gal 6:15). The apostle Paul said I bear the marks of Christ in my body. He was sealed by the Holy Spirit and his body was covered in marks of persecution from antichrist men who rejected the gospel.

Our security is Christ! The security of the sheep is the Shepherd. Christ has redeemed us (Gal. 3:13; Heb. 9:12). We cannot be unredeemed! Christ has sanctified us (Heb. 10:10-14). We cannot be unsanctified! Christ has justified us (Rom. 3:24). We cannot be unjustified! Christ has made us complete (Col. 2:10). We cannot be made incomplete! Brother Don Fortner used to say, "Our relationship with the eternal God does in great measure determine what we do. But what we do, in no way determines our relationship with the eternal God."

“They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mt. Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth forever. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people from henceforth even forever” (Psalm 125:1-2).

Notice the message of the everlasting gospel.

Revelation 14: 4: These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, *being* the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. 5: And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.

The Lord Jesus has made his people the righteousness of God in him. By the Holy Spirit creating a new man within us, born of incorruptible seed, in which is no sin we have no guile. And before God in Christ we are without fault. Therefore, the everlasting gospel preached to us from heaven teaches us to fear God rather than men below. Christ is working all things in judgment for his people in this earth. Worship Christ.

Revelation 14: 6: And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, 7: Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

Amen!