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(Unless noted otherwise, Scriptures quoted are from the New
International Version, 1984 edition)

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1 - Introduction

Revelation 13:16-18

He [Beast from the earth, False Prophet] also forced everyone, small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on his right hand or on his forehead,

so that no one could buy or sell unless he had the mark, which is the name of the beast or the number of his name.

This calls for wisdom. If anyone has insight, let him calculate the number of the beast, for it is man’s number. His number is 666.

For centuries, this prediction about the Mark of the Beast and the 666-Number has mystified generations of truth-seekers; and to witness its fulfillment was always regarded as a clear sign of soon-coming cataclysmic events.

The search for its meaning has brought on many and diverse theories, ranging from non-sensical to shockingly accurate.

Whenever the subject of the Antichrist is mentioned, then usually, he is right away associated with this mysterious number 666. In the world at large, 666 is a major signpost of the End of the Age that many people are aware of.

And indeed, when we take a close look at recent technology, it is astounding to note how much this portion of Scripture has already come to be fulfilled in our modern world.

There is some confusion also. And this study will endeavor to outline how the prophecy about 666 and the *“mark”* applies to modern reality. Some of this will be a review of old ideas, but hopefully, we can advance and break some new ground in our understanding of this mysterious message from ancient times.

As John the Apostle describes his vision, it becomes obvious that the future means of commercial exchange would be something very peculiar to the people of ancient times. The phrase *“buy or sell”* in Revelation 13:17 expresses what goes on every day in the world’s market places. This has gone on throughout history; and in the modern world, of course, nothing has changed in this respect. But the manner in which we carry out commercial exchanges has changed a great deal.

God revealed to John the apostle that the traditional methods of bartering and coinage, used in his day, would no longer be operating. Instead, the people of the future - us - would have a peculiar new way of conducting their buying and selling operations, via this *“mark”* and *“number”*. And this was quite beyond his comprehension in those days.

Only in recent years has John’s revelation begun to make sense. For in the last 50 or so years the world has seen a total transformation of its means of exchange because of new inventions that use electronic funds transfer, computer technology, etc. So, have we at last come to the stage when this mysterious revelation is ready to be understood and is about to come to pass? For almost 2,000 years, its meaning lay hidden, but now it seems we truly are on the verge of seeing this ancient revelation arriving to its fulfillment.

The rise of modern technology makes it easier to understand this

mysterious passage in Revelation 13. On the other hand, our modern inability to appreciate the viewpoint of those who lived in ancient times can hinder our understanding of this passage. By taking both viewpoints into consideration - both modern and ancient - this should help us get a more accurate perspective on how this ancient revelation about our peculiar technology is coming to pass in the modern world.

It is both intriguing and faith-building to realize that the Almighty could foresee the curious inventions of our age back in a time when nothing remotely similar to them existed.

In a nutshell these verses 16-18 of Revelation 13 describe the cashless, computerized credit system that will be operating during the reign of the Antichrist and False Prophet. And to some extent we are already living in that system.

And what are the “*mark*” and “*number*”? No doubt, they are the products of modern technology. Scientists and computer experts are already toying around with microchips, even tattoos, that can fulfill what is said about the “*mark*” - a device that can be implanted in the hand or forehead and enable humankind to carry out commercial exchanges without the use of cash or bartering. The world is already accustomed to using credit/debit cards and electronic transfer as a convenient alternative to coins and paper money. We could assume, for the purpose of this study, that the technology for the “*mark*” shall move out of the experimental stage and be implemented on a worldwide scale. As for the 666 “*number*”, there is reason to believe that it is already in use (as we shall see further ahead).

So the new system has arrived on our doorstep. And eventually, it will become the norm, and even mandatory (or at least difficult not) to join this buying and selling system foretold so long ago.

[Continue to Part 2, How in the World will the World Ever Accept Being “Marked”?](#)