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4 - “Mark” Counterfeits “Seal”

Oddly enough, in the Book of Revelation we find that, not just the followers of the Beast, God’s people also are “marked”. They too are given something on their forehead called a “seal” or “name”. (See Revelation 7:3-8, 9:4 for “seal” and 3:12, 14:1, 22:4 for “name”.) The two words are used interchangeably; and the “seal” simply stands for the “name” of God the Father and of the Lamb (Christ). So interestingly, this seems to parallel what was noted in the previous post about the “mark”

Revelation 13

16 He also forced everyone... to receive a **mark** on his right hand or on his **forehead**,

17 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.

18 This calls for wisdom...

Revelation 14

1 Then I looked, and there before me was the Lamb, standing on Mount Zion, and with him 144,000 who had his **name** and his Father's **name** written on their **foreheads**.

and “*name*” of the beast.

Following right on the heels of Revelation 13:16-18 about the “*mark of the beast*”, John writes, “*Then I looked, and there before me was the Lamb, standing on Mount Zion, and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads.*” (Revelation 14:1) Evidently, the Lord is trying here to bring out the other side in this matter, showing the corresponding reality in the Heavenly Realm.

What an unusual juxtaposition of scenes! One moment we read about the world's people being given this mark in their foreheads so they can buy and sell; then suddenly, John receives this contrasting vision; he views another group of people who also have a “*name* (of Christ and of the Father) written on their foreheads.” But these are God's chosen people rejoicing in the Heavenly Realm before the Throne of God. (These chosen people include, not only the 144,000, but, as Revelation 7:9 states, “*a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language.*”)

To the Apostle this next vision may have helped him to understand

there was nothing so remarkable about this curious invention of a future age, this “*mark of the beast*” on the forehead. It’s only a poor imitation of something that God does with His own people.

Evidently, this having a name written on the forehead is a reality in the Heavenly Realm that Satan is seeking to imitate in his kingdom. If Christ writes His name on the foreheads of His people, then why shouldn’t the false messiah, the Beast, do the same with his followers in the earthly kingdom? And if the Seal represents the Name of God and of Christ, the Mark also can represent a name - the “*name of the beast*”.

In the Apostle’s mind this “*mark*” seemed a repulsive thing since it was to mark its bearers as having taken on the name of the “*beast*”. In addition, the word “*mark*” had some negative associations, namely, of a man-made device used for branding and identifying animals and for engraving idolatrous images. Whereas, by contrast, the “*seal*” is God-made, noble and uplifting, representing “*his [the Lamb’s] name and his Father’s Name*”.

Seals were also used by earthly kings to make documents secure. Whoever or whatever could claim to have the king’s seal was considered to be acting in the name of that king; he would be granted high priority treatment and protection. And that is similar to what the Lord will do for His people, who are marked with the “*seal*”, during those days of Great Tribulation when the rest of the world will be getting their “*mark of the beast*”.

The word “*mark*” was used in one instance to refer to the manufacture of idols, things that were “*graven by art and man’s device*”. (Acts 17:29, KJV) Or a more literal translation would say, “by the mark (same word as in ‘*mark of the beast*’) of art and man’s imagination”. The manufacture of idols requires the use of sharp engraving tools. So from that angle it is a fitting word if we understand the “*mark*” correctly as an injection of a computer chip into the skin by a sharp pointed instrument, a syringe. The “*seal*”, on the other hand, for God’s people suits the idea of something supernatural created by God.

We see then that the Revelation 14 passage is a continuation of Revelation 13:16-18 and brings out the contrast between those caught in

the Beast's system and those who struggle to stay free of it. Chapter 13 features John the Apostle as the only one speaking, describing the remarkable vision of the two “beasts” of history's final empire. Most of the Revelation chapters contain some word of explanation or pronouncement from an angelic being or spirit guide, or from the Lord Himself. But chapter 13 doesn't. So this following chapter 14 seems to be a continuation that is meant to give a more rounded explanation of the preceding vision.

Here in chapter 14, three angels are allowed to draw some important conclusions that were not mentioned in the previous chapter. This includes a warning to the world about the mark of the beast which was not included in chapter 13: “*A third angel followed them and said in a loud voice: ‘If anyone worships the beast and his image and receives his mark on the forehead or on the hand, he, too, will drink of the wine of God's fury. . .’*” (14:9-10)

(The question of whether or not this Scripture means that everyone who takes the “mark” will get sent to the “lake of fire” is addressed in [Appendix 1 of Post C-1](#), which is part of another study called *Hell in Heaven? Heaven in Hell?*)

To summarize: The scene where God's people stand around the Throne, having “*his name and his Father's Name written on their foreheads*”, is connected, by way of contrast, with the previous scene depicting the Beast's people with a “mark” in their foreheads. The “mark” enables them to gain entry into the world of buying and selling, the world's barren utopia of materialism.

And so, this peculiar “mark” system of the End Time seems to be nothing more than the Enemy's last-ditch and futile attempt to mimic a reality that already exists in the Heavenly Realm. And for those who join his system, the following chapter 14 adds the warning of regret and repercussions in the Afterlife.

In the spirit world it seems great significance is attached to this business of having a name on the forehead – something we don't fully comprehend – but well understood to the dwellers on That Side. There are several mentions in the Scriptures about this sort of thing – more often in

reference to God's people than to the Devil's people. And whether it is the "seal" or the "mark", both represent a "name" (either of God or of the Beast). (A list of these Scriptures is in the [Appendix](#).)

Because of its importance, this may be why the Dragon is so intent on having his False Prophet engineer this system where the world's people are given this "mark" (or "name of the beast") on their foreheads, as well as in their hands. The Devil is trying to usurp the place of God in this, his worldly domain; and apparently, this business of having the world's people receive the "mark" is a crucial part of that plan.

If we look closely at the description of the "mark" (and what it does), we can see how it imitates what the "seal/name" does for the people of God. And this suggests that the "mark" is more than just a minor matter of practical economic necessity; it is actually a type of initiation rite into the Devil's kingdom. As mentioned earlier, the "mark" is also the "name of the Beast". Having the "name of the beast" means you belong to the Beast (and the Dragon), just as God's people have the "Father's name" and belong to Him. And that is why the "mark" (rather than the "number") is portrayed as the sign of one's worship of the Beast.

According to ancient oriental usage, slaves and soldiers bore the name or stamp of their master or commander branded or pricked (cut) into their bodies to indicate what master or general they belonged to, and there were even some devotees who stamped themselves in this way with the token of their gods. [from *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, pg. 588 (under definition for *stigma*, the Greek word for "mark"), published 1901]

So then, what does the "mark" do? Well, first of all, it identifies those who belong to the Beast's kingdom, similar to how the "seal/name" identifies (to the judgment angels) those who belong to God's Kingdom. Secondly, those who have the mark enjoy the Beast's protection (against his persecution of the people of God), just as the seal/name shields God's people from His judgments on the world. Thirdly, the mark, which probably acts like some kind of all-purpose credit card, allows those who have it to receive their sustenance, to gain access into the false utopia of the world's market-places. By contrast, those who have the Father's seal/name get to enjoy access into Heaven and all its eternally satisfying

pleasures, far surpassing anything this world has to offer.

Finally, the mark could be regarded as a sign of reliability and honor, in a similar way to how credit cards are viewed by the world nowadays. Perhaps there will be a difference in the level of honor shown by whether people receive the mark in their hand or, as a sign of greater distinction and dedication to the system, in their forehead. And, of course, the seal/name that God's people receive is plainly a sign of honor and dedication for them.

Another feature about the mark, as far as we know, will be its invisibility, which is similar to how the seal/name will be on God's people. Presumably, the seal is something that you won't see with the eyes of flesh, but those in the spirit world can detect it. Similarly, the mark, if we understand it correctly, will also be invisible, detectable only by special sensing devices.

Considering all these factors, it is easy to see that the "mark" system of the False Prophet is actually a kind of religious system that imitates the Lord's own means of identifying His people. It is not unlike the practice common in many religions that use tattoos and marks of various kinds; only it takes place on a much wider scale. The mark serves as a way to initiate people into and identify them as members of his powerful new religion - one that combines Mammon-worship with worship of the Antichrist.

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Appendix:

Following is a list of various examples of the "seal/name/mark" written in the foreheads of God's people and of some who were not His people:

Genesis 4:15 Then the LORD put a mark on Cain so that no one who found him would kill him. Even Cain was afforded God's merciful protection so long ago by means of a mark of some kind.

Deuteronomy 6:4-5,8 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and with all your strength... Tie them as symbols on your hands, and bind them on your foreheads. Even today devout Jews practice this custom: a band worn on the forehead with a phylactery attached (a slip of parchment with Scripture passages inside a tiny box).

Ezekiel 9:1-2,4-6 "Bring the guards of the city here..." And I saw six men [angelic beings] coming, each with a deadly weapon in his hand. With them was a man clothed in linen who had a writing kit at his side... and [the LORD] said to him, "Go through the city of Jerusalem and put a mark on the foreheads of those men who grieve and lament over all the detestable things that are done in it." As I listened, he said to the others, "Follow him through the city and kill... but do not touch anyone who has the mark." Here, the same English word "mark" is used for God's people, as a sign of identification to ensure their protection. Probably the Lord has done this from time to time during history as a way to preserve His people during times of catastrophic upheaval. And it will happen again in the future (according to Revelation 7:3, 9:4).

Revelation 3:12 Him who overcomes I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will he leave it. I will write on him the name of my God, the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem which is coming down out of heaven from my God; and I will also write on him my new name. Now here it doesn't say where the "name" is written, but several of the following examples place the "name" (or "seal") on the forehead.

Revelation 7:3 Do not harm the land or the sea or the trees until we put a seal on the foreheads of the servants of our God. Here evidently, the "seal" provides protection for God's people during the upcoming judgments of God.

Revelation 9:4 They were told not to harm the grass of the earth or plant or tree, but only those people who did not have the seal of God on their foreheads. Again, the seal is for protection.

Revelation 14:1 Then I looked, and there before me was the Lamb,

standing on Mount Zion, and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads. Along with 3:12 and 22:4, the "name" is a sign of honor and heavenly reward and allows the privilege of dwelling in the Heavenly City and standing before the Throne of God.

Revelation 17:5 And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH (NKJV). Even this symbolic representation of a decadent world system was done with a name on the forehead; and it's there for the purpose of identification.

Revelation 19:12,13 His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. So, even Jesus has a name on His person, and it looks like it is also in the region of the forehead although it doesn't say so specifically. He had some other names on his person too: "**KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS**", the which were written "**on His robe and on His thigh**". (19:16)

Revelation 22:4 They will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads.

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