

Αποκάλυψη
REVELATION
13:16-18

OUTLINE

- 🕒 Main Point
- 🕒 The Mark (v. 16)
- 🕒 Historical Uses of Marks (v. 16)
- 🕒 The Number of His Name (v. 17)
- 🕒 The Number of the Beast (v. 18)
- 🕒 Some Notes on Gametrea
- 🕒 Some General Things to Note About the Mark
- 🕒 Lessons for Us

MAIN POINT

- 📢 We now have one of the most famous passages in the Bible which deals with the Mark of the Beast and his number
 - 📢 This is an identification of the Beast as a person and as a system
 - 📢 The Mark is given out as a mean of political control and to show one's alignment with the Beast
 - 📢 Likely cannot/will not be understood until the Beast is revealed
- 📢 While this is a passage we can learn from and broadly understand, it is primarily directed at those who are following Christ during the Tribulation period
 - 📢 Not possible to find the identity of the Beast through his number until the Beast has been revealed
 - 📢 Many interesting findings come from a study of numbers in Scripture and the use of gematria, but we need to be careful how we use and apply those findings
 - 📢 Much of what passes for analysis is speculation with made-up rules
- 📢 Be careful how we spend our time, even our Bible Study time
 - 📢 Why are we studying something? Is it truly to learn more about God and be closer to Him?
 - 📢 Is it to be more effective stewards of what He has given us and celled us to?

THE MARK (V. 16)

Who makes this happen

-  Most associate this Mark with the First Beast
-  But the natural language implies that it is the Second Beast who compels people to take the Mark

No one is exempt from the order

-  Universal in character
-  A mark of unification and identity

Area of the Mark

-  On the hand or in the forehead
-  A parody of the seal of God in **Revelation 7:3**
 -  Given that both are spoken of in a vision implies that they were not invisible as John could see them (Thomas V2, p. 181)
 -  The placement of the Beast's Mark on the hand and forehead would be the most visible place for them, thus interpretations of something invisible or under the skin, etc. do not really follow the plain language understanding of the text
-  God previously marked out His own in **Ezekiel 9:4**
-  Note that in both those instances God's marking is only on the forehead, no mention is made of the hand
-  Compare with the apparent wounds of the First Beast in **Zechariah 11:17**
-  If this is so, then people are identifying themselves with the First Beast

HISTORICAL USES OF “MARKS” (V. 16)

- 🗣️ “Mark” here is *charagma* and “was a term for images or names of emperors on Roman coins (Thomas V2, p. 181)
- 🗣️ Some “marks” are the time of John to consider
 - 🗣️ Marks or stamps were given on official Roman documents, but those were not on the person, so they are not what the passage refers to
 - 🗣️ Jewish phylacteries also do not fit as those are on the left hand, and the Beast is unlikely to want Scripture as a mark
- 🗣️ The closest analog of this kind of mark in the days of John
 - 🗣️ Branding was common for many professions (soldiers, slaves, various temples, etc.) (Thomas V2, p. 181)
 - 🗣️ While branding of slaves was common, it was not as degrading a we might think
 - 🗣️ Marked them out as a sign of loyalty and protection
 - 🗣️ Denoted ownership of the person by the one giving the brand
 - 🗣️ If one had a religious affiliation with a brand, that meant you belonged to that god
 - 🗣️ This is the most likely reason for the Levitical injunctions against brands, tattoos, etc.
 - 🗣️ Modern tattoos in the West have a very different purpose, so aligning the Mark with a tattoo in general is stretching the analogy
 - 🗣️ Jews who submitted themselves to Ptolemy Philopator I branded Jews who submitted to Grecian worship with an ivy leaf (3 Maccabees 2:29)
- 🗣️ What can we conclude
 - 🗣️ Denotes ownership with, or identity to, the Beast of the one who takes it
 - 🗣️ Seems to place them under his protection in some capacity (an important thing for the Earth-dwellers)

THE NUMBER OF HIS NAME (V. 17)

Commerce and the Mark

-  The need for food and other necessities will be a powerful tool to ensure compliance with the new regime
-  There is already scarcity (e.g., **Revelation 6:5-6**), now even in that scarcity the only way to survive will be with the Mark
 -  Forces compliance and helps centralize control
 -  Helps the Beast System starve to death those that it already wanted to kill
-  Some historical precedents
 -  Time of Domitian for those with suspect loyalty (Ramsay via Thomas, v2, p. 182)
 -  The Holodomor under Stalin
 -  Under Mao in the Great Leap Forward
-  This time at the End it will be more complete, with nowhere to flee, and with other causes of mass death all around

The Name and the Mark

-  Literally, “the name, or, which is the same thing, the number of the name” (Swete via Thomas V2, p. 182)
-  In the Greek, the name (*onoma*) and the mark (*charagma*) are appositional meaning they are one and the same (Charles via Thomas v2, p. 182)
-  “The equivalence means that as a name, it is written in letters, but as a number, the name's equivalent is in numbers” (Thomas, v2, p. 182)

THE NUMBER OF THE BEAST (V. 18)

👤 John now goes on to explain the number of the Beast

👤 It appears that this message is directed to those at the time of the Beast, not so much the readers of the day or us

👤 The language calls back to what precedes it making this a complete whole

👤 Most similar in structure to **Revelation 17:9**

👤 It is a call to those at the end to be able to compute the number itself

👤 **Hypothesis 1:** The 666 is the number of man and falls short of the perfect 7 for Christ, thus marking the Beast as human vs. the Divine Christ. But this fails to account for the command to “count” (*arithmon*) and would not give a unique identifier to the Beast as implied in the language. It also begs the question of what would a non-human number be?

👤 **Hypothesis 2:** Reference to some past human ruler. Use of gametrea to reach the desired number for Nero, Caligula, etc. But all past references do not fit with the future context of **Revelation**, and one must have a conclusion in mind first, then devise ways to reach that conclusion.

👤 **Hypothesis 3:** Use the gametrea to reach the solution. It gives the identity of the Beast System, and the chief ruler of that system. Some merit, but there are issues with this approach.

👤 **Hypothesis 4:** “Former Palestinian terrorist Walid Shoebat offers an idea that might give us an indication of the Antichrist’s background. Shoebat notes that the Greek letters that give the number 666 are, in fact, identical to the Arabic for “In the name of Allah.” There are many ideas about the possible Islamic character of the Beast” (Missler, *Behold a White Horse*, p. 57)

👤 **Hypothesis 5:** Simply will not be understood until the time of the end (c.f. **Daniel 12:4**) and will have significance and meaning to those at that time.

👤 Begs the question of why they need to be told this in the first place, and why they do not already know, especially if they have Revelation (or at least this part) to read and understand? Why would they need more?

SOME NOTES ON THE GAMETREA

- 🏰 Ireneus long ago noted that it is impossible to know the identity of the person represented by the 666 (gametreal or otherwise) until that person arrives on the scene
 - 🏰 In other words, yes, we have a way to reach his identity, but that does not help us until he has been revealed
 - 🏰 Even if he is on the earth right now, and even if he is a famous person (very debatable) it still would not help us due to 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4
 - 🏰 Recall also that this is a message which will be rendered useful and practical for those going through the Tribulation, not so much for us
- 🏰 There are lots of forms of Gametrea (Missler, *Revelation*, p. 265-6)

Χριστός

Christos

X ξ ς

Antichrist = Pseudo-Christ
(In place of Christ)

χ 600

ἑξακόσιοι *hexakosioi*

ξ 60

ἑξήκοντα *hexakonta*

ς 6

ἑξ. *hex*

666

- *Ragil* (nominal)
- *Kolel*, the *ragil* values plus the number of letters in the word
- *Katan*, small values; all tens and hundreds reduced to 1 - 9 by summing the digits (Also called “reduced” values)
- *Hakadmi*, nominal values plus the values of each letter preceding it
- *Hameruba Haklali*, the value of the word *squared*
- *Hameruba Haperati*, the sum of the squares of each individual letter
- *Miluy*, the sums of the values of the *names* of each letter that makes up the word (Also called “filling”)

- 🏰 It is really, really easy to become unprofitable with speculation, especially when you can make up the rules

SOME NOTES ON THE GAMETREA

WHERE THE RULES ARE MADE UP



AND THE POINTS DON'T MATTER

SOME GENERAL THINGS TO NOTE ABOUT THE MARK

- 👤 The Mark of the Beast cannot come until the Beasts come
 - 👤 Cannot happen until the Church is out of the way (c.f. **2 Thessalonians 2:1-4**)
 - 👤 Therefore, any attempts to say that something which exists today is/can be the Mark are incorrect
 - 👤 The same applies to the deciphering of the Number more broadly
 - 👤 Attempts, while fascinating, are often unprofitable
- 👤 The Mark and the Number is his (the Beast's), not yours
 - 👤 Attempts to make this a social security number or a credit card are also incorrect
 - 👤 Such numbers are unique to the individual to whom they are assigned, not a separate, remote entity
 - 👤 The obsession with deciphering the Mark and the Number, I think, comes from a position of Christians not being secure in their own Salvation
- 👤 The Mark appears to be something one takes knowingly and consciously
 - 👤 Identifies one as belonging to the Beast
 - 👤 People are not tricked into it
 - 👤 It is something which is propagated and used as a means of overt political and religious control
 - 👤 Therefore, this is not something you “accidentally” take on yourself
 - 👤 Nor does it appear to be something innocuous in everyday life
- 👤 The whole point of **Revelation** is that this is something from the End, not the present
 - 👤 There are things we can learn, but it is dangerous to conflate what is in Revelation with the past or present (excepting **Chapters 2-3**)

LESSONS FOR US

- 👤 It is easy to get caught up in passages like this and create hyperbolic speculation
 - 👤 We are called to be sober (1 Thessalonians 5:6-8; 1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8, 2:2-6; 1 Peter 1:13, 5:8)
 - 👤 We need to understand that we undermine our testimony and the impact that we could have when we say things which are obviously not correct
- 👤 Any speculation at present for what the Mark will be is largely pointless
 - 👤 The Beast has not been revealed
 - 👤 Many speculated hypotheses, technological implementations, etc. that may be used are relevant to an individual, not an external person
- 👤 Why do we spend so much time getting caught up in this?
 - 👤 Is it really to warn others? How well are we doing with that when what we say is obviously foolish?
 - 👤 Is it because deep down we are worried about our own Salvation?
 - 👤 See John 10:28-30
 - 👤 Is it because the spectacle of it all is so carnally intriguing?