The Mark of the Beast!

Joe Slater

What is the mark of the beast (Revelation 13:16, 17)? For many decades, ominous-sounding "prophecies" have identified it as everything from your Social Security number, to the magnetic strip on your credit card, to the UPC bar code on a can of green beans! Maybe the fact that these "prophets" (?) keep changing their minds ought to tell us something . . .

In Revelation, the mark of the beast stands in direct contrast to the "seal of the living God" stamped upon the foreheads of 144,000 of His faithful servants (7:2-4). Those with the mark of the beast are condemned and punished severely; those with the seal of God are protected and blessed. In neither case is the mark or seal a literal, physical stamp.

To be consistent, those who insist that the mark of the beast is a literal, physical mark must also explain about the seal of God – what it is, and can they show that they have it? Also, since they insist the mark is literal, then the number 144,000 must also be literal (exactly 12,000 from each of the Israelite tribes listed; Revelation 14:1-4 identifies them all as male virgins, which would also have to be taken liberally)! Since nearly all of these prophecy-mongers are married Gentiles, their theory loses credibility, to say the least!

Under the Old Covenant, circumcision was the literal, physical sign (seal, Romans 4:11) of the chosen people. No such physical sign exists under the New Covenant. Rather, we are sealed with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13; 4:30). Paul wrote, "Nevertheless, the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: 'The Lord knows those who are His'" (2 Timothy 2:19).

The seal or mark, then, is simply a symbol of identification. Those with the seal of God are those who belong to Him. The mark of the beast, on the other hand, symbolizes the fact that those people are servants of that awful power that was persecuting God's people unmercifully. (In context, the "beast" is the government of the Roman Empire.)

Should you be worried about having the mark of the beast? If you mean a literal, physical mark, then no, you need not be concerned. If, however, you understand the truth – that the mark or seal symbolizes your allegiance, then yes, you should be deeply concerned. Nothing is more important than your allegiance, for it determines your eternal destiny.

Do you wear the mark of the beast? Or is the seal of the living God upon your forehead?

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Your mistakes
don't define you.

How you respond does.

Fight on today.

**For a righteous man may fall seven times and rise again,**

But the wicked shall fall by calamity

*Proverbs 24:16*

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