



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. (Rev 13:16-17)

² And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, ³ Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. (Rev 7:1-3)

The interpretations I have read of those verses that refer to the Mark of the Beast and the Seal of God are many and varied. Far better minds than mine have wrestled with the question; but, nevertheless, I will give my own interpretation using my understanding and interpretation as revealed in those running lights the Lord has given me.

When I was a very young lad, the Books of Daniel and Revelations were my favorite. To a boy under ten years, it was difficult to grasp the symbology scattered throughout both books. It was then difficult for me to understand how mankind could be so callously ignorant as to be deceived by the coming Anti-Christ; but now I can see that this is actually happening in our time. As I read in Revelations *“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”* I worried that I would be held down, branded, and damned without recourse. Of course, I have come to know better as I have matured in God’s Word. The Mark of the Beast is not a brand, or mark placed ON the forehead, but inside the forehead. It is a conscious decision made in the frontal lobe of the brain which is the seat of judgment and decision making.

As we have discussed before, and as many Reformed Commentators have averred, there are only two families upon this earth – those of God, and those of the Prince of Darkness. We all belong, by the election of God (or His reprobation) to one or the other of these families. There is no middle ground. Our modern society loves grey areas, but there are no grey areas with God – all is absolute! We all have already received either the Seal of God, or the Mark of the Beast in our foreheads, or in or right hands (the hand by which we sign contracts and swear an oath to follow a person or an order.)

THE MARK

“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. (Rev 13:16-17) We may note several clues from this text concerning the Mark of the Beast and what it means:

1. Mark does not distinguish between classes of people – great and small, rich and poor, free, and bond – none of these circumstances disqualify for the reception of that Mark; Those who are so marked “RECEIVE” the Mark – they are not compelled beyond all measure of force;
2. The Mark is received **IN** the forehead, or **IN** the right hand;
3. The Mark is a distinguishing mark of privilege that grants the recipient the right to commerce;
4. The Mark represents the name or number of a person of demonic power.

We cannot be held down and branded with a mark, or UPC code, against our will. Such forced reception would not be consistent with our willingness to follow the Beast. The Mark is our consent (and assent), given knowingly, to follow the Beast in his wicked pursuits. No one is forced to sin – it comes quite naturally. The one who receives the Mark has considered his rational options and receives the Mark by mental consent. It is a decision to follow that is made **INSIDE** the forehead or decision-making seat of the brain. It is not only a mark of privilege to commerce, but a mark that relegates its possessor to damnation and the judgment of God. The Mark has two facets – one, is that the recipient gives mental approval (**INSIDE** the forehead) to follow the Beast; and two, the recipient of the Mark **ACTS** on that decision to do the works of darkness (**IN** his right hand – the hand of action). As Augustine says: *“The mark in the right hand and forehead implies the prostration of bodily and intellectual powers to the beast’s domination. “In the forehead by way of profession; in the hand with respect to work and service.”* If we have the Mark, it was willingly received. Now we will consider the Seal of God. There are Christians today who have opted to suffer beheadings than to receive the Mark of the Beast. It is happening in northern Iraq as I write this devotion in the safety of a thus-far free land.

THE SEAL

*“³Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. (Rev 7:3) The Seal of God is likewise given and received **INSIDE** the forehead. The Seal of God is given by the Four Angels to the Elect of God. The Seal of God must likewise be assented to in the decision making part of the soul – the forehead. The Holy Ghost moves in the deadened (to righteousness) heart to draw the object of its love to Christ. The Name of Christ becomes the Seal that holds and binds to God. The Beast will always seek to suppress the mention of that name. The elders and scribes of Jerusalem puzzled over the apostles and how to suppress the faith which they preached – particularly, the name of Christ: *“What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny it. But that it spread no further among the people, let us straitly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name(JESUS). And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus.”* (Acts 4:16-18) Earlier in this chapter from Acts we are told that there is **NO** other name by which men may be saved: *“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.* (Acts 4:12) The principle in invoking the name of Jesus is not merely an audible utterances as if a charm, or magical phrase – it is acting upon His Name in the same way Jesus would act. It is thinking as that Name would think and do. This is true faith. We are not unlike ambassadors for Christ. An ambassador acts with the authority of his nation, but his authority only extends as far as the nation has granted to make decisions on its behalf.*

Of course, the River of Love flows, miraculously, in both directions. We have the Name of the Lord as our Seal – we are called Christian; and He has our names recorded in His Book of Life: *“¹⁹Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.”* (2 Tim 2:19)

I hope no dear Christian soul is worried that he may be sold lock, stock, and barrel to the Beast simply by being forced to receive his mark. The soul that is saved is secure in the bosom of his Lord. Nothing can tear that soul away from the Good Shepherd who has already laid down, once and for all, His life for the sheep. If one receives the Mark, it shall be with his eyes open and a willing heart. If we are sealed by God into His glorious kingdom, we shall be so throughout this life, and into the annals of Eternity.