

The Mark of the Beast - 666

There are six passages that mention the mark of the beast in the book of Revelation.

*And [the second beast] exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. **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:** 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. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six. - Revelation 13:12-18*

And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:

And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. - Revelation 14:9-11

And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God.

And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. - Revelation 15:1-2

And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshiped his image. - Revelation 16:2

And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshiped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. - Revelation 19:20

*And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshiped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.
- Revelation 20:4*

First, let us look at what the Mark of the Beast is not

Over the years, many have speculated on the nature of the Mark of the beast. Before we try to understand what the mark of the beast is here is a list of the things that the mark is not.

The Mark of the Beast is not a social security number

Many fundamental Christians abhor the social security number and the governmental control that comes with it. There is one positive note, my social security number separates me from all the other men with the name Jeffrey W. Barnes and at least one of them is a deadbeat dad. However, a society based on Christian ethics would not have this need for a Social Security Number.

The Mark of the Beast is not a Social Security Number because:

- There is no association in the Social Security Number with the worship of an image.

In every passage where it mentions the Mark of the Beast, it also mentions worshipping an image of the beast. In trying to understand the mark, we should also at the same time try to understand its association with its image.

- The Social Security Number is not in the hand or forehead.

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: - Revelation 13:16

- You are able to buy and sell without a Social Security Number.

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. - Revelation 13:17

- A king or kingdom in honor of another king or kingdom did not issue the Social Security Number.

Read Revelation 13.

*And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast [king or kingdom] before him, and **causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.** And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; **saying to them that dwell on the earth, that***



they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. 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: 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. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.

- Revelation 13:12-18

- There is no death penalty for refusing to receive a Social Security Number.

Technically the death penalty may not be for refusing the mark of the beast; However, you must worship the image to receive the mark associated with it. It is in failing to worship the beast that one receives the death penalty.

*And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that **as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed**. 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:*

- Revelation 13:15-16

The Mark of the Beast is not the commercial barcodes

Today, most supermarkets in most countries use a Universal Barcode (UBC). This is because a UBC increases profit by making inventory control easier. Stores can carry many more product varieties and at the same time keep much smaller inventories than they would otherwise be able to do.

It is true that there are two thin bars at the beginning, middle and end of some barcodes. It is also true that the two similar looking bars represent the number six. They may have done this on purpose, or it might just be a coincidence, either scenario is scary. The Lord condemns our covetousness and the only times that we have recorded where he acted in his anger, were when the merchants defiled his father's house.



However, like the Social Security Number, commercial barcodes are not the Mark of the Beast Because:

- There is no association of barcodes with the worship of an image.
- There is no death penalty for not using a UBC.
- Merchants do not place the UBCs in your hand or in your forehead.
- You can legally buy and sell without a UBC.
- A king to honor another king or kingdom did not mandate UBCs.

You can Google the number 666 and barcodes for more information on them.

The Mark of the Beast is not a miniature bio-circuit implant

There may be positive reasons for implanting a bio-circuit, like a pacemaker for instance. You may not agree with using bio-circuit implants (except the pacemaker) I do not either. Even so, that does not make them the Mark of the Beast.

One argument for implants is that it enables us to identify our children and make it more difficult for kidnapers. Returning Christian morals to our society would make these implants unnecessary.



While a bio-circuit implant is not the Mark of the Beast, the mark may use a chip implant – it would make buying and selling easier as identity theft would be much more difficult. The bio-circuit implant is not necessary to fulfill Bible prophecy, anymore than a cigarette lighter was necessary to offer incense to Caesar.

A miniature bio-circuit implant (by itself) is not the Mark of the Beast, **until**:

- There is an association of miniature bio-circuit implants with the worship of an image.
- There is a death penalty for not using a miniature bio-circuit implant.
- You cannot legally buy or sell without a miniature bio-circuit implant.
- One king in honor of another king or kingdom mandates the miniature bio-circuit implant.

At the end of this age, there may be a universal monetary system. In fact, there is one today, it is controlled by the International Monetary Fund and backed by the US dollar. In late March of 2009 several countries including Russia, China and The United Nations Commission of Experts on International Finance Reform called for a one world currency that will not be backed by the dollar.

Christians should watch as this develops. Note that the one-world currency could come about without a one-world government. This would allow one king (world leader) to mandate the mark of the beast in honor of another kingdom.

What is the Mark of the Beast?

As we have already recognized:

- There is the association of the Mark of the Beast with the worship of an Image of the Beast.
- There is a death penalty for not worshiping the beast and taking his mark.
- The lost will place the Mark of the Beast in their hand or in their forehead.
- You will not be able to buy and sell, except perhaps on a black market, without the Mark of the Beast.
- One king (world leader) in honor of another king (world leader) or kingdom will mandate the Mark of the Beast.

The Image of the beast

*Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: **Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them:** for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that*

hate me; And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments. - Exodus 20:4-6

When Christians talk about the Mark of the Beast they often speak of chip implants, barcodes, and Social Security Numbers. Often they neglect to mention the **Image** of the Beast. Yet, every passage in the book of Revelation that mentions the mark also mentions the image.

Before Moses came down from Mt. Sinai with the Ten Commandments, the children of Israel were worshiping a Golden Calf. You can read the whole story and about God's anger in Exodus, still, we will look at one verse here.

*And the LORD said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book. Therefore now go, lead the people unto the place of which I have spoken unto thee: behold, mine Angel shall go before thee: **nevertheless in the day when I visit I will visit their sin upon them.** And the LORD plagued the people, because they made the calf, which Aaron made. - Exodus 32:33-35*

While Christians usually believe in the Ten Commandments, like thou shalt not steal and thou shalt not bear false witness, we tend to ignore the second commandment. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image. The Roman Catholic Church has even gone so far as to remove it from the Ten Commandments, other denominations have just ignored this statute.

Here are a few other passages on images and idol worship:

For the day of the LORD of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low: [...] and upon all pleasant pictures. - Isaiah 2:12,16b

[There Idols,] They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat. They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them. - Psalm 115:7-8

What profiteth the graven image that the maker thereof hath graven it; the molten image, and a teacher of lies, that the maker of his work trusteth therein, to make dumb idols?

Woe unto him that saith to the wood, Awake; to the dumb stone, Arise, it shall teach! Behold, it is laid over with gold and silver, and there is no breath at all in the midst of it.

*But the LORD is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him.
- Habakkuk 2:18-20*

If we look to the Scripture for understanding, we should see that God detests idols (images) and all those who partake in them. I am not trying to sound legalistic, however if you are using images of any kind in your spiritual life you are living in error. We should also pray about the time we spend watching the television and looking at images on the internet.

As already noted, the Mark of the Beast is connected with the worship of the beast. According to Paul, at the end of the age:

[The son of perdition] *Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.*
- 2 Thessalonians 2:4

At this time, the antichrist may place the Image of the beast in the temple.

*And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and **they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate.***
- Daniel 11:31

*And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and **the abomination that maketh desolate set up**, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days.* - Daniel 12:11

Daniel said he “*shall place the abomination*” and the abomination that makes desolate shall be “*setup*”. This implies that the son of perdition places something in the temple as well as demanding universal worship of himself.

666 Mentioned in the Bible

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 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.

*Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: **for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.*** [666]
- Revelation 13:16-18

The number *six hundred, sixty and six* is mentioned in association with three different people in the Bible. First King Solomon, next a fellow named Adonikam and finally with the son of perdition or 'beast' at the end of the age.

King Solomon

The “*Here is wisdom.*” mentioned in the above verse may make one ask, who was the wisest man in the Bible?

Behold, I [the Lord] have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee [king Solomon] a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee. - 1 Kings 3:12

Not only was King Solomon given wisdom, he was given great riches.

Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was six hundred and threescore and six [or 666] talents of gold; - 2 Chronicles 9:13

Solomon means peaceful, it comes from the Hebrew word sha'lo'om. Though God gave King Solomon great wisdom, later in his life he built the High Places in Israel.

For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father. For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. And Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and went not fully after the LORD, as did David his father.

Then did Solomon build a high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon. And likewise did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods.

*And the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the LORD God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice, And had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods: but he kept not that which the LORD commanded.
- 1 Kings 11:4-10*

If I am correct in my interpretation of this allegory, the Antichrist will control much wealth and he will give the impression that he is wise as well as a man of peace. Two verses of scripture that may confirm he has these attributes are:

By peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand. - Daniel 8:25b

Then shall he return into his land with great riches; and his heart shall be against the holy covenant; and he shall do exploits, and return to his own land. - Daniel 11:28

Adonikam

The children of Adonikam, six hundred sixty and six. - Ezra 2:13

Adonikam is another man in scripture associated with the number 666. We do not know much more about Adonikam other than his name and number of offspring. His name may give us another piece to the puzzle. According to the Strong's Concordance, the definition of Adonikam:

From H113 and H6965; **lord of rising** (that is, high); Adonikam, the name of one or two Israelites.

This is an interesting coincidence as one of the antichrists in the last days will have a deadly wound that will be healed.

And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. - Revelation 13:3

*And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, **that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.** - Revelation 13:14*

The antichrist will have the illusion of dying and then coming to life. This will motivate the world to worship him and finally receive the Mark of the Beast.

The Beast

Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six. - Revelation 13:18

In the Strong's Concordance, the number 666 in Revelation 13:18 has a definition that reads like this:

Strong's number G5516

chi xi **stigma**:

The 22nd, 14th and an obsolete letter (**G4742** as a cross) of the Greek alphabet (intermediate between the 5th and 6th), used as numbers; denoting respectively 600, 60 and 6; 666 as a numeral.

Paul used the obsolete letter stigma (the bold font) in chapter six of his letter to the Galatians.

*From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.
- Galatians 6:17*

According to the Strong's Concordance the definition of stigma is as follows:

Strong's number G4742

Stigma: From a primary word stizō (to "stick", that is, prick); a mark incised or punched (for recognition of ownership), that is, (figuratively) scar of service: - mark.

From this definition, come three ideas.

First, receiving the mark of the beast is a decision of service. This begs the question, whom will you serve?

Second, the Mark of the Beast is a mark of ownership. Jesus said, "*My Sheep hear my voice*" and "*No man can serve two masters*". In that day, you will have to decide to whom will you will belong?

Third, if the mark is "*incised or punched*" that would make it possible for him to insert a chip "*for recognition of ownership*" as we do in animals today? This definition from James Strong was before the bio-chips, so this was not a contemporary thought that may have biased him.

666 in the world today

In the occult, six is a special number. Most of us have heard of a hex (the number six or spell) being placed on someone. With the exception of a hex, most examples of new age or the occult using the number 666, come from Christian writers and Christian websites.

While the mark of the beast is related to the number 666, this does not mean that every 666 is the mark of the beast.



Occasionally someone will place a 666 in their advertising. The 666 may not have been intentional by the artist and even if it was, we should not judge their motives; they may be ignorant, trying to be funny or perhaps they are just trying to excite the Christians. However, not only are they desensitizing themselves by using it, they are

playing with fire. While Christians should not condemn those who advertise using the 666, we do not have to buy their products.

In the logo on the right some see 666. Could not the number also be a 999 or maybe a 000? Personally I see 777 as being the most likely number represented by this symbol. Perhaps instead of looking for a sacred number of 666 in every occult or advertising logo, we should be looking for “*the number of a man*”. Do not look for a man with the letter six hidden in his name, this has led to countless mistaken results in the past; rather look for a man that flaunts the number 666.



Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.
- Revelation 13:18

Is the Mark is necessary in order to buy or sell?

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: 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. - Revelation 13:16-17

This verse says that you need one of three forms of identity in order to transact business when the antichrist comes to power. The Mark of the Beast, the name of the beast, or the number of his name will be the three options. Perhaps the supermarkets will scan the hand like a debit card. However, is the world really ready to give up its paper currency? How will bargain hunters purchase their trinkets at garage sales? Many remote villages in the third world are not yet wired for electronic currency and in such cases, paper currency may still be available.

Whose image and superscription would be on the one world currency? Perhaps in some cases it will only be necessary to pledge elegances to the beast in order to make a transaction. This may be possible, at least before everyone has received his mark. (Sort of like a ‘hail Hitler’ was a mandatory greeting for Germans in the early 1940s)

The real purpose for the Mark

and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand. - Daniel 8:25b

When the antichrist uses peace to destroy many, it is very likely that many of his followers will still think that they are doing good by taking the mark. Jesus said:

They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. - John 16:2

Since the disciples of Jesus Christ will not follow the antichrist, the world will look at us as being against world peace and unity.

Perhaps the world may think that reducing the world’s overpopulation is also a good thing. Everybody who takes the mark will be able to justify what they are doing, they will also justify their persecution of those who refuse to take it.

*The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?
- Jeremiah 17:9*

Persecution of Christians

The antichrist will use the Mark of the Beast in order to separate the population of the earth into two groups, the people who will serve him and those people who will not. This will make his final solution much easier to implement.

Many Christian leaders teach that according to 2nd Thessalonians 2:7-8, the Christians will be raptured before the man of sin can be revealed. Actually, the passage does not say anything like that, in fact reading the second chapter of 2nd Thessalonians in context, Paul clearly and with a warning against this teaching said:

*Now we beseech you, brethren, by **the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him**, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.*

***Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;** - 2 Thessalonians 2:1-3*

Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. - Matthew 24:9

At the end of the age, the Christians will be hated by all nations. Those who hate the Gospel of Jesus will affirm their position by taking the mark. Everything to do with the Bible, the church, or God will no longer be tolerated.

As Amos said, receiving the mark will create a famine for the Word of God.

*And a man's uncle shall take him up, and he that burneth him, to bring out the bones out of the house, and shall say unto him that is by the sides of the house, Is there yet any with thee? and he shall say, No. Then shall he say, **Hold thy tongue: for we may not make mention of the name of the LORD.** - Amos 6:10*

Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD:

And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it. - Amos 8:11-12

Unfortunately, because of the teaching of a pretribulation rapture, when the antichrist makes his appearance many Christians will be taken by surprise and be completely unprepared (and they will not be able to blame Paul). Both the book of Revelation and the book of Daniel describe this time in history.

*And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that **as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.** - Revelation 13:15*

And of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spoke very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows.

*I beheld, and **the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them;***

Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. - Daniel 7:20-22

*And he shall speak great words against the most High, **and shall wear out the saints of the most High,** and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time. - Daniel 7:25*

And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries: but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits

And they that understand among the people shall instruct many: yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days.

Now when they shall fall, they shall be helped with a little help: but many shall cleave to them with flatteries.

And some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white, even to the time of the end: because it is yet for a time appointed. - Daniel 11:32-35

While the world hates us Christian, God will not abandon us. Here is a small sample of the Psalms that will comfort and exhort the saints during that time.

Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens; let thy glory be above all the earth.

They have prepared a net for my steps; my soul is bowed down: they have digged a pit before me, into the midst whereof they are fallen themselves. Selah. - Psalm 57:5-6

Deliver me from the workers of iniquity, and save me from bloody men.

For, lo, they lie in wait for my soul: the mighty are gathered against me; not for my transgression, nor for my sin, O LORD.

They run and prepare themselves without my fault: awake to help me, and behold.

Thou therefore, O LORD God of hosts, the God of Israel, awake to visit all the heathen: be not merciful to any wicked transgressors. Selah. - Psalm 59:2-5

*Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.
- Psalm 76:10*

Israel will not to take the mark

Warning: The many of the statements in this chapter are only the author's opinion, and they should not be mistaken for the clear and plain teaching of scripture.

While many individual Jews will receive the mark of the beast, the nation of Israel as a country will be exempted from this requirement. How would Jesus come for Israel if they all had the mark?

From the beginning, Israel was always separate from the nations.

For thou art a holy people unto the LORD thy God, and the LORD hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth. - Deuteronomy 14:2

In the early 1990s, the United States rallied world support against Iraq for its invasion of Kuwait. Under the colors of the United Nations, in what President Bush called Desert Shield and later Desert Storm, every nation except one showed up for what Saddam Husain called the Mother of all Battles. The only nation not to show up was the only nation, other than Kuwait, that had a real grievance against Iraq. Even while Iraq fired about one hundred scud missiles into Tel Aviv, Israel remained out of the war and separated from the nations.

This is not the only time that Israel separated herself from the other nations. The Jews were the only people not required to burn incense to Caesar during the middle of the first century. While Israel was exempt, Christians received the death penalty for this abstinence.

At the same time the world receives the Mark of the Beast, Israel is making a covenant with him. This covenant will be for seven years and promises them peace and safety, even allowing Israel to rebuild their temple.

Wherefore hear the word of the LORD, ye scornful men, that rule this people which is in Jerusalem. Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves: - Isaiah 28:14-15

[...]

*And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it.
- Isaiah 28:18*

[...]

Now therefore be ye not mockers, lest your bands be made strong: for I have heard from the Lord GOD of hosts a consumption, even determined upon the whole earth. - Isaiah 28:22

The antichrists (there are many) will require the whole world, except Israel, to receive the mark. This will cause a major exodus from the nations into Israel. The antichrist's plan is to gather all the opposition into one place where with a great show of pomp, he can annihilate them.

And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate. - Daniel 9:27

The abomination of desolation mentioned here might be the placing of His Image in the temple. I believe Paul that is speaking of this event when he says:

Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. - 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4

This falling away mentioned by Paul literally means a defection from truth. Paul could be referring to the Mark of the Beast, and the world taking the mark would identify the antichrist. These two events will happen at the same time.

After getting the world to serve him, the antichrist goes up to Israel and claims to be God. I do not know what he planned to do next, probably kill all those in Israel who refused to serve him. However, his three and a half years are up, and for the next three and a half years, God is pouring out His revenge on a world that has gone apostate.

When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains: [...]

For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. - Matthew 24:15-16,21

The abomination of desolation does two things. First, it separates those in Israel who believe in Jesus from those who do not. Second, it brings the uncontested reign of the antichrist to an end. They will not be marking any more people.

Though I presented it as fact, much in this chapter was the author's opinion. Therefore, the speculations should be judged as such and even rejected if they are found to contradict scripture.

The world is punished for taking the mark

*And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.
- Matthew 5:30*

While this verse, taken in context, was in a passage referring to fornication, is there any reason it could not stand on its own? God being merciful, we should preach repentance until he comes.

Cutting off a right hand if it had the mark would be a small discomfort compared to the punishment that awaits those who keep it. The wrath of God will start at the time the antichrist defiles God's temple.

For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. - 1 Thessalonians 5:3

The punishment before the end of the age

After the antichrist's abomination and defiling of the temple of God, comes a time of desolation on the earth such as was never known in its history. The Bible states in several places that God's wrath is specifically poured out on those who have received the mark of the beast.

And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image. - Revelation 16:2

And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds. - Revelation 16:10-11

The prophet Isaiah mentions a time of desolation so severe, that if you believe him, it should remove any temptation to take the mark.

And he shall snatch on the right hand, and be hungry; and he shall eat on the left hand, and they shall not be satisfied: they shall eat every man the flesh of his own arm: - Isaiah 9:20

The prophet Zechariah mentions a certain ill behaved shepherd. Does this passage imply that the antichrist may take his own mark?

Woe to the idol shepherd that leaveth the flock! the sword shall be upon his arm, and upon his right eye: his arm shall be clean dried up, and his right eye shall be utterly darkened. - Zechariah 11:17

Punishment after judgment day

Not only will the Lord punish those who take the mark of the beast at the end of this age, their punishment is "forever and ever".

*If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And **the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.** - Revelation 14:9b-11*

The seriousness of taking the Mark of the Beast cannot be overstated. Read the punishment again. Since some denominations do not believe in a hell fire, they do not believe that passage means what it plainly says. When you change the meaning of a scripture passage, you are bearing false witness! (Bearing false witness is saying the witness said something that he did not say, or saying the witness did not say something that he did say.) In light of Revelation 22:19, this is the wrong passage to wrestle with.

And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. - Revelation 22:19

Conclusion

Taking the mark of the beast is the ultimate rebellion against God. To take the mark a person will have to choose Satan and the wickedness that he stands for. While we speculate on the mark of the beast today, once the antichrist, his image and his mark show up, there will be no doubt. As Jesus warned:

And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.

For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.

Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man. - Luke 21:34-36

By Jeff Barnes