

Are you marked of God?

Revelation: How It All Ends

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Are you marked? I think we study the mark of the beast all the time when we say 666 and they're going to do this on their forehead or their hand and we go way down deep into it. Let's not dwell on the negative. The positive aspect of that is God marks people too and we read that last week when we read in verse 4 about his marking so God has a reason to mark people and I want you, again, to ask yourself: are you marked?

Looking in Revelation 22, I'm going to read all of what we've already read up to verse 9 today so if you'll follow along with me, please. Revelation 22, last chapter of Revelation. No reason to rush. I feel like this one has gone by really fast compared to other books that we've been in. Revelation 22, verse 1 says,

“1 And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. 2 In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. 3 And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: 4 And they shall see his face,”

There is a key word right there. We're going to come back to that,

“And they shall see his face and his name shall be in their foreheads.”

That sounds like a mark.

“5 And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever. 6 And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done.”

Shortly, we normally think that's a short time and it seems like it has been a long time so we're going to talk about that.

“7 Behold, I come quickly,” another short verse, “blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book. 8 And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things.”

We talked about last week, is that an angel as we typically think of them with wings? Or is it someone else because 9 says,

“9 Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not,” do what? Don't worship me, “for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.”

It sounds like that person, this fellowservant, there's a key word, brethren of the prophets was a marked man. Would you agree? And I would even go as far to say John was marked whether he knew it or not and then who else was marked? Let's work our way through this passage here real quickly.

We read in Revelation 22 a little bit of what it's going to be like in this new heaven, new earth or at least during the thousand year reign, things are going to change. Then, we read about specifically they shall see his face. The King James doesn't put a capital “H” on his but who are we talking about? God. See God's face or Jesus' face even more specific and when you see his face in the Old Testament, you should surely, what? Die. You should die if you see God because God is perfect and you are not and if God in his perfection looks on your non-perfection, you would instantly die. It would rob the life out of you because you're not perfect like he is but it's so cool that the person that has the mark can see his face. Won't it be wonderful some day when we can see God's face because it's something that no one could ever do in the past? We're going to look at that as well of someone who tried to or asked to but he didn't see his face either.

“Behold, I come quickly,” we'll talk about that but let's talk more about specific marks. Again, as I mentioned before, we're all familiar with the mark of beast, we've studied that thoroughly and it says, “they shall see his face and his name shall be on their foreheads.” We know the mark of the beast can be located either on the forehead or the hand, the back of the hand I think the verse says, particularly so that they can use it. This picture that I found was on the front of the hand and I guess it doesn't really matter, he can put it wherever he wants or maybe you've even heard of the microchip theory that they'll just insert it in a little chip that's small, you wouldn't even know it was there and you would just go to Lowe's and when you want to make your purchase, swipe your hand and then you're good. I mean, can we see that today? Easily. Easily we could see that technology that already exists or barcodes as you see in the picture.

But let's talk about marks of God. What would they be? What would be a mark of God? Well, I'd say the symbol of most of history would certainly be a cross. All the things in the Old Testament lead up to Jesus and all the things in the New Testament talk about what Jesus did on the cross and the cross is kind of like the center-point of history so

maybe the mark would be a cross. That was my original thought when I first thought of what would a mark of God be? It would be a cross but then again, I know a lot of people, I shouldn't say I know them personally but I've seen a lot of people that tattoo themselves with crosses all over the place so they're marked of God, right? Well, at least in some way, shape or form, I guess they figure that's their penance, that if they get enough crosses on them, then they'll be good enough to get to heaven. Again, we know the Bible doesn't teach that.

Let's go back to the Old Testament, all the way back to the beginning, Genesis, and look at a passage where the mark of God was Jehovah and that's what those Hebrew letters are right there. Yehovah or Jehovah in the Old Testament was what God would use to say, "I'm going to put my name on you." Well, his name, whenever you look at those passages of putting his name on you, it was always the name Jehovah. We know there are many names of God and we've been studying those over in the high school and it's been a great study so let's get specific here. Genesis 4:15, please, if you'll turn all the way back to the beginning. Talk about our first mark that I could find and I encourage you because I'm sure I didn't find all the marks in the Bible, that would probably take three days worth of lessons but I have one very short, maybe 20 minute lesson, hopefully. One that I came up with right away that I remembered that was a mark of God, drilling on the positive, what does God do with his marks, was the mark that he gave to one of his sons, technically, Adam and Eve's son, Cain, after he had killed Abel. We remember the story. Cain killed Abel and because he did that, he had to be punished and when he was punished or was given his sentence he said to God, "My punishment is too great." He knew very well that people were going to be upset with what he did and they would probably hunt him down and do what? Kill him, so in his mind, he was asking for God's protection, "God, protect me because I know people will kill me. I'm sure of it." I don't know if he actually had a moment in his life where he actually felt remorse for what he did but he certainly felt bad that he was caught as any human would.

Let's read in verse 15 of chapter 4. This is the Lord answering Cain after he said, "My punishment is too great to bear." "And the LORD said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain," almost like as if it were going to happen, maybe it did, "vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold." Who? Who takes the vengeance on him sevenfold? God would. He's saying that, "I will take vengeance on him." "And the LORD set a mark," there's the mark, "upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him." So there must have been some way that anybody that walked up to him could see physically, "This guy has God's protection." Now, I'm not saying that he had the name Jehovah on his forehead but he could have. We're going to talk more and more about the use of forehead and how it's used in the rest of the Bible but he had a mark of protection/vengeance so it wasn't just protected. He wasn't immortal. I'm sure he could still die, especially of natural causes but if someone did happen to slay him, this was God saying, "I will protect you as far as I'm going to tell people they shouldn't kill you but if they do, this is what's going to happen." So, he marked him with vengeance as well. The word "the Lord" there in verse 15 is the word "Jehovah," so if he's marking him with a certain name, he's marking him with the name Jehovah and that's important and we'll come back to it.

Please turn to Exodus. Pastor Bill loves to relate Exodus to Revelation, well, I found another one so he can add it to his list of what 24 now, or something like that? This is in Exodus 28 and I'm going to start in verse 36. This is another mark of God given to his high priest at the time who was Aaron. Aaron was the high priest. Let's begin reading in verse 36, "And thou shalt make a plate of pure gold, and grave upon it, like the engravings of a signet, Holiness to the LORD." Again, the L-O-R-D is capitalized. It's referring to that Jehovah. That Lord there is Jehovah. Then it says in verse 37, "And thou shalt put it on a blue lace, that it may be upon the mitre; upon the forefront of the mitre it shall be." In other words, in the front. Verse 38, "And it shall be upon Aaron's forehead," so God uses the forehead to display things, "that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things." Now, the iniquity of the holy things is not the word "sin" there. When we looked it up – let's see, does anyone else have a different word for "iniquity" there? Guilt, bear the guilt and I think that's even a better word. When we think iniquity, we think sin or how about the guilt from sin. "Of the holy things which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts; and it shall be always upon his forehead, that they may be accepted before the LORD." So what kind of mark is this? If he's wearing it on his forehead and it's to show that God has done something with the guilt or the sins to make ourselves holy, remember, he's the high priest, how did the Old Testament work? Well, you had to give sacrifices and the high priest had to sacrifice for you because you couldn't go into the holy of holies and since he was to be holy and be a substitution for you, isn't this a picture of Jesus all over the place? He would go in and because you saw on his forehead that he was doing that for you, he had a mark of provision or a mark of holiness. God providing a way to cover up the guilt and it wasn't permanent back then, it wasn't that you could accept Jesus like we do today and then have all of your sins forgiven. They had to do this regularly but it was still a provision.

Again, the word "holy to the LORD" there is the word "Jehovah" and the location of the mark to be noted is where? On the forehead. We'll see if there's any other. I started doing a word study on "mark" but then I started getting people named Mark. You could say they were marked literally but that wasn't what I was going for so I actually did a word search on "forehead" and there was lots of forehead markings and that's where I got these verses from.

Other marks. Ezekiel, comes before Daniel if you'll turn over there, please. Ezekiel 3. Let's see if there's another mark of God or of Jehovah in these passages. Starting with verse 4. This is Ezekiel being given instructions to tell Israel. We know Ezekiel was a prophet and he was a messenger in a way, messenger is a key word. What other word means messenger? He was an angel, if you will, to the congregation of Israel. Well, there is no mark on this particular verse but I think there's something similar to it that we needed to study. Verse 4 in chapter 3, "And he said unto me, Son of man, go, get thee unto the house of Israel, and speak with my words unto them. For thou art not sent to a people of a strange speech and of an hard language, but to the house of Israel." Go speak to the people that are in your language. If I was ever called to be a missionary, I would hope I would get to speak English because I really struggle with anything else so this God saying to Ezekiel, "You can do this. This is not difficult." This is the difficult part, verse 6, "Not to many people of a strange speech and of an hard language, whose words thou

canst not understand. Surely, had I sent thee to them, they would have hearkened unto thee.” Oo, there's some criticism there. If I had sent you to a foreign country, if you go deep into the parts of Africa where they just don't know anything about God and you give them the good news, they're probably more apt to hear you because they're searching, they're dying for it, but if you go to Berean Baptist Church, I'll just use our name or you could use any other church in this blank, and you try to tell someone that, “I think you need the gospel.” “Yeah, I know. I got it. Whatever.” They're hard to hear you, it says. They would have hearkened unto thee if they were from some other country.

Verse 7, “But the house of Israel will not hearken unto thee.” Oo, that's hard for a preacher to hear. They're not going to listen to you but I want you to go, “for they will not hearken unto me,” God, they won't hearken unto God's voice, “for all the house of Israel are impudent and hardhearted.” My Bible here has a little cross-reference, impudent: stiff; stiff of the forehead; hard of the heart. If you have a stiff forehead, does that kind of give you the idea that you're not going to listen to someone? I don't know. Yeah, you just kind of wrinkle your brow when you think about it.

Verse 8, “Behold, I have made thy face strong against their faces, and thy forehead,” Ezekiel's forehead, “strong against their foreheads,” so you've got to be more adamant as the next verse says. “As an adamant harder than flint have I made thy forehead: fear them not, neither be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house. Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, all my words that I shall speak unto thee receive in thine heart, and hear with thine ears. And go, get thee to them of the captivity, unto the children of thy people, and speak unto them, and tell them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear. Then the spirit took me up, and I heard behind me a voice of a great rushing, saying, Blessed be the glory of the LORD from his place.” Lord in that passage is Jehovah.

It's a description of a forehead. It's not necessarily a mark but God is taking your forehead and making it harder than the stubborn ones, harder than their forehead so God can strengthen you in such a way if you have God's mark to speak to someone that doesn't want to hear.

Ezekiel 9, just a few pages over, verses 4-8, “And the LORD said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that,” do what? “That sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof.” Now, this is an old English way of saying this but if you're crying and you're sighing over the abominations, it doesn't sound like you're very happy about it. You would be against them, wouldn't you agree? If you're against the sin that's going on. Put a mark on their forehead if they actually feel bad about the things that are going on. Do we feel bad that the United States has left its Christian roots? Of course. We, as Christians, should have regret almost about that but that's not the right word.

Let me keep reading, verse 5, “And to the others he said in mine hearing, Go ye after him through the city, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity: Slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women: but come not near any man upon

whom is the mark; and begin at my sanctuary. Then they began at the ancient men which were before the house. And he said unto them, Defile the house, and fill the courts with the slain: go ye forth. And they went forth, and slew in the city. And it came to pass, while they were slaying them, and I was left, that I fell upon my face, and cried, and said, Ah Lord GOD! wilt thou destroy all the residue of Israel in thy pouring out of thy fury upon Jerusalem?”

I read that whole passage because I want us to remember what we've been studying through the tribulation. People on the earth who are saved and have what we're going to discover is the mark of God, are going to feel this way that, “God, are you going to kill everyone? Are you going to be in such a way that the entire earth is going to be destroyed?” No, God has made a provision. He's put a mark on some, the remnant of Israel, to have a way out so this is Jerusalem's protection mark. God is going to have a mark on some that cannot suffer from all the tribulations we've been talking about. They won't have to and, again, that goes back to Exodus when there was the plagues in Egypt, the children of Israel didn't suffer from those plagues. They were spared because they were the marked of God.

So we're specifically talking about Israel, specifically talking about Jerusalem. Let's see if we can get more broad to include all Christians so go ahead and turn just a few more pages, still in Ezekiel, lots of Ezekiel passages that study about the mark of God and that's Ezekiel 16:12, just one verse. If you have any subtitles over this section, you might have about what God's bride or what God will do with his bride to be married to and how much he wants to adorn her and protect her and give her the best and his bride in this case way back in the Old Testament, would have been Israel. He wanted to restore his bride but we know in the New Testament his bride is the church, everyone that has accepted him. So, what is he going to do with his bride? He's going to mark them. Verse 12, “And I put a jewel on thy forehead, and earrings in thine ears, and a beautiful crown upon thine head.” Do we talk about crowns in Revelation? Crowns that go on people's heads? Of course. Does anyone have a different word for “jewel”? It says “and I put a jewel on the forehead.” Ring on the nose, so it's not the same, I'm curious about that. Again, it's all the decorations that would come with a woman about to be married, God's people set aside, provisionally marked as wealthy and I would love to say if you read on in the other verses, I put a little mark on there “undeserving” because if you read down, there are a few verses here, “but thou didst not trust in thine own beauty and playedst the harlot because of thy renown, and pouredst out thy fornications on everyone that passed by; his it was.” Again, I go back to another passage that we spoke on about the great whore and how Israel had left everything about God and there was a time when God had to go out and rescue Israel and Israel, by extension everyone else that would be his marked.

Those are the Old Testament marks. Let's see if we can move it a little bit closer to what we're talking about. It's always important to stay in context. More specifically, what is the modern mark of God, a mark that has not happened yet. The first mention of the mark of God in Revelation is Revelation 3, so if you could turn there, please. This is before they even started talking about the mark of the beast so I would venture to say even though, yes, we studied the mark of the beast quite a bit, if the first mark in the book of

Revelation is a mark of God, which one should we study more? I think that's more prominent, more important, but that's just me.

If you remember back when we studied this in chapter 3, verse 11, God's people got a mark. Let's read it, "Behold, I come quickly," there is that verse again. We just read that in 22, "hold that fast which thou hast," you have held fast in the past, keep holding fast, "that no man take thy crown." If you were to not hold fast anymore, you would lose that reward of the crown. Don't let anybody steal that from you.

Verse 12, "Him that overcometh," the overcomer, "will I make a pillar in the temple of my God," this is Jesus talking so he's talking about his Father, "and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God," I'm going to write on him the name of God and we already talked about in the Old Testament the name of God was? Jehovah. I'm going to write on him "Jehovah," or in this case it was Theos. "And the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem," so you're going to be as we talked about before with the stone, someone mentioned this morning, another type of a mark. You're on the roll; you're on the roster; you're in the class of Jerusalem because you're marked. You're a member of that city; you're set apart. "Which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name," so maybe it's not Jehovah, it's my new name.

Turn ahead, please. Those are the overcomers' marks, specifically let's talk about a different mark. Chapter 7:2 and we're almost finished. Chapter 7, verse 2, a different kind of mark and this actually has two marked people, two different marked people in this passage so if you're one to believe that the only people that get marked are the 144,000, please look carefully at this verse because I think we can see two different people that are not the 144,000 and then the other that is the 144,000 that are marked. "And I saw another angel," and I'm going to put "angel" and I'll tell you why, "ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels," so is it an angel talking to an angel or just another person in heaven talking to the angels? Well, let's see what he has to say. He says, "to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea," so he's talking to the four angels at the four winds that are raining down the destruction of the tribulation.

This is what he said, verse 3, "Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads." Wow, there's like four words we need to see there. Let's back up. "Until we have sealed," this is a sealed person speaking; this is an angel of the Lord or maybe not an "angel," maybe a person from heaven talking to the other angels saying, "Please don't destroy the earth yet because we haven't put our protection plan on the sealed." And who were the sealed? They were servants. We saw before in Revelation 22 that they were called servants and he said, "Don't worship me because I'm a servant too." "Of our God," the name of our God, "in their foreheads." Again, the location of where that mark is going to be. This is a sealed "angel" pleading for the unsealed to be sealed before the attacks come down.

Let's finish out that section real quick, "And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of

the children of Israel.” Then they list them all the way through verse 8. Yes, that was 144,000 so they are sealing 144,000 with an angel that said, “Wait, don't destroy the earth yet. We've got to seal these people and then have at it.”

Revelation 14:1, just one quick verse that we know we're talking about the 144,000 here of being sealed or marked by God. “And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads.” We talked about, okay, they're going to be sealed, okay, now they're sealed. I saw 144,000 people sitting on top of a mountain with an angel, maybe a real angel, maybe another person from heaven, a messenger, that had marked or saw the mark of the Father on their forehead and in this case, the Father here really speaks specifically to how God treats us. The word “Father” in the Greek is actually father like this guy's father and that guy's father. It doesn't say “God,” it doesn't say “the Lord.” It says “the mark of *the* Father, the Father of all.” Not just any kind of god or lord or Jehovah but our Father.

Last of all, back to the text verse. Revelation 22:4. Are there anymore that we can pull out of this verse? Knowing what we've read about the different marks of God, we should recognize some terms here. One more time, verse 4 of chapter 22 says, “And they shall see his face.” That reminds me of someone else in the Old Testament, Moses asked to see God's face and God said, “You can't see my face or you will die. Since you can't see my face, I'm going to say you can stay in the mountain here and I will pass by and you'll see my back.” I don't know what God's back looks like but I'm sure it's pretty wonderful and the face is probably even better but what happened to Moses when he came down off the mountain after he had seen God's back? He glowed in the face; he shone. He almost had a mark on his face, didn't he? And we, too, would have a mark if we saw God or I think of the story of Jesus, not a false story, it's a true story, when Jesus was up on the mountain, who was he with? Moses and Elijah and he was seeing God. I imagine Moses and Elijah had seen God by then, don't you? And they probably were glowing and now Jesus was transfigured and started to glow as well because he had now the official mark of God.

Then all true Christians will be marked in this day because that's what it says at the end of the verse here, “and his name shall be on their foreheads.” Who is “their”? Well, look in the preceding verses, it's everybody that's in the kingdom of heaven; it's everybody that's in this new heaven and new earth so we're all going to have the mark because the first part of the verse, we saw his face. How do we get the mark of God? You see God's face and it will be physically at that time and spiritually today.

Now, we don't have time to get into verse 10 but hopefully you will read it on your own, study about it next week. I've got some questions for you to answer. A great question was brought up last week that said: “And he saith unto me, seal not the sayings of the prophecy in this book for the time is at hand.” Remember we talked about the quickly thing quite a few times? So, if the time is at hand and it is quickly, why has it been 2,000 years? If the context says that people need to know this, then why has it been 2,000 years? If evil will be punished and the righteousness will be rewarded because that's what the whole mark was about, rewarding the righteous and punishing the evil for not having

the mark, then why has it been so long? Last of all, in Daniel 12, Daniel was told to seal up the book and not to tell people. As the opposite, John was told, “Don't seal the book and tell people.” So what is the significance of that first? Think about that and I'm sure Pastor Bill will talk about that next week.

Let's pray.

Dear Lord, as we come to this morning, thank you for all that you do. I pray that you will just guide us and help these words to ring true. Remind us daily that we have a mark and although our faces aren't glowing, they should at least in some way show or shine the gospel to everyone else. I pray, Lord, that we have that mark and it's not just a mark that we hold deep inside and hide under a bushel. I pray, Lord, that we show our mark to everyone that could possibly know and if we have the fear, Lord, in our lives that they're not going to listen, that you'd stiffen our foreheads so that we could spread the gospel even better to the stiff foreheads that are out there. Thank you, Lord, for all that you do and we ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.