

Current Affairs #145 – Counting the Number of the Beast
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Now, many of you have been held on pause—we brought you to the edge of the cliff, so to speak, in these discussions about:

1. The mark of the beast,
2. The number of the beast,
3. The name of the beast.¹

We stopped short of discussing the thing that everyone seems to focus on when we are looking at the Book of Revelation: What is the meaning of the mark of the beast, and what is the number of the beast? What is the significance of the number 666? I will read it and set it up as we plow into this mystery today. This is from the Book of Revelation, the 13th chapter; I am reading from the King James Version, at verse 18.

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 [in other words, 666] (Revelation 13:18 KJV, comments added in brackets).

We have already talked about the mark and the name, and now we are about to talk about the number. The first thing to note here is it says, “Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding count the number of the beast.” It is very, very important that whatever is meant by counting the number of the beast is related to “he who has understanding.” Is it not amazing that people at this point, even biblical scholars, get into a speculative mode where it becomes a matter of arithmetic to try to cipher what this number is?

I want to first move very methodically through this passage. The understanding spoken of here is one of the seven Spirits of God, according to Isaiah the 11th chapter: “A shoot shall come out of the stump of Jesse and from its roots a Branch will form. The Spirit of the Lord shall be upon Him,

All Scripture quotations are from the NKJV, unless otherwise noted.

¹ See Revelation 13:16-17 (emphasis added): “He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the **mark** or the **name** of the beast, or the **number** of his name.”

the Spirit of wisdom, knowledge, understanding, counsel, power, and the fear of the Lord.”² So the Spirit of understanding, obviously, by which one may decipher anything in the Scriptures is not secular.

The last days are a time of the war between the sons of Zion and the sons of Greece.³ In the interpretation of Scripture, the only relevant understanding is that which comes as one of the characteristics of the Holy Spirit. It was said of the Lord Jesus Christ—this shoot that comes out of the stump of Jesse, from whose roots a Branch will form—that it is the Spirit of the Lord who will be upon Him in manifestation of the seven characteristics of the Holy Spirit, including the Spirit of understanding. The next line from where we quoted in Isaiah, chapter 11, says the following, “He shall not judge by the seeing of the eye or the hearing of the ear.”⁴ In other words, the eye and the ear are two of the five senses that the human body has. The soul interprets impulses taken in from our biosphere through our five senses. He is saying, the way that Jesus—this Branch who is filled with the seven Spirits of the Lord—the way He will do all things is without the influence of the natural senses. It is not by the seeing of the eye or by the hearing of the ear, so there is discernment.

Men who operate from the point of view of the soul resort to reason to figure out things in the Scriptures. It is a patently foolish and unfruitful enterprise. Mostly, that is what we have had in “counting the number of the beast.” The entire understanding focuses upon what is the meaning of 666. To approach it that way is patently a red herring—it is a distraction. No matter what you come up with—looking at it from that viewpoint, from arithmetic or from logic—no matter what you come up with you are going to be wrong. This is not a time when we can afford to be wrong. This is a time when the accuracy of Scripture must be interpreted through Scripture itself, by means of the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit.

² See Isaiah 11:1-3a NIV: “A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him—the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the LORD—and he will delight in the fear of the LORD.”

³ See Zechariah 9:13 BSB: “For I will bend Judah as My bow and fit it with Ephraim. I will rouse your sons, O Zion, against the sons of Greece. I will make you like the sword of a mighty man.”

⁴ See Isaiah 11:3b NIV: “He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears;”

So I am going to take you through the Scriptures, and surprisingly, every aspect of the mark or the concept of a mark is widely addressed in Scripture. Even the concept of three sixes is widely addressed in Scripture, so there is no guess work here. But, that is exactly what is meant by the Scripture that says, “Men of understanding”⁵—it is understanding the Scriptures. It is not PhDs in Bible; it is certainly not philosophers of this age; and for God’s sake, it is not speculation, conjecture, and your opinion. None of these things make any difference. They leave you as blank and as vacuous in your understanding as you have been. Why does it continue to be a mystery discussed so often, discussed so frequently, completely without resolution? Because it is mainly guessers—people who are taking a guess. Guessing results exclusively in an opinion; and an opinion is only valuable if people agree with it, but its value is to those people who agree with it. We have been trying to formulate an understanding of Scripture and guessing on the basis primarily of what people are pre-disposed to think it means by the application of reason. That is why we had such foolish things as, “88 Reasons Why the Rapture Will Be In 1988.” Of course it does not happen.

But look, the problem is primarily the ignorance of the church as a result of the people being kept in ignorance. By and large, what passes for the church today is an immature collection of children with no serious comprehension of the written word. I am astonished at the level of biblical ignorance amongst Bible-studying people. The reason is, it is simply a regurgitation of five-hundred-year-old reformation theology. God did some great things in the reformation, but it was on the way to the revelation of all things. If we are stuck in the reformation and the understanding of things that God restored in the reformation, we are five hundred years behind the time.

I want to move on so as not to consume the time just on paving the way. It says, “He who has understanding,”—I have addressed the issue of understanding; this is one of the seven

⁵ See 1 Chronicles 12:32a KJV: “And of the children of Issachar, *which were men* that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do; ...”

See also Proverbs 1:5: “A wise man will hear and increase learning, And a man of understanding will attain wise counsel”

characteristics of the Holy Spirit—so it is understanding of the word as derived from the revelation of the Holy Spirit. Nobody who traffics in reason as opposed to revelation has any potential of decoding the mysteries of Scripture. They are spiritually discerned, and the methodology of spiritual discernment is called revelation, not reason, because we are in a different realm when it comes to the things of Scripture.

Let us go on. It says, “Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast.” What does the word “count” mean? What is meant by the word “count”? First of all, it is not about arithmetic; it is not about numbering, as in the word *arithmos*,⁶ from which we get the English word “arithmetic.” You would think that if he meant that this would be a mathematical calculation, he would have used the Greek word from which the English word for arithmetic is derived, which is the word *arithmos*. He does not use that. He uses the Greek word *pséphizó*,⁷ which is the word “to count.” We get the English word “perceive” from that. He who has understanding is capable of perceiving the number of the beast. To perceive is a synonym of the word “discern.” This is not a mathematical calculation; it is a matter subject to discernment, or to perceiving.

In the Greek, this word *pséphizó* was associated with counting as it related to an election. For example, if five persons were standing for election to a particular office, the clerk administering the election would have five urns, each with the name of the candidate standing for election: five urns, five candidates. He would also have on his table a pile of pebbles, and each citizen—of course a citizen was allowed to vote; the populace was allowed to vote—so every citizen approaching the table to vote for one of these candidates would be given a pebble. The citizen would look at the names on the urns and drop the pebble in the appropriate urn. When all the citizens had voted, they would empty each urn upon the table in public view, and they would count the number of pebbles in each urn. They would declare the winner, obviously, on the basis of the one with the most pebbles in his urn. Why would you call that “to perceive”—*pséphizó*? Why would you call it “to perceive”? Because the idea was that you needed to perceive the will of the people. You needed to be able to discern what the will of the people was. So, this was the manner for discerning.

⁶ See *arithmos*, Strong’s Greek 706 - <https://biblehub.com/greek/706.htm>

⁷ See *pséphizó*, Strong’s Greek 5585 - <https://biblehub.com/greek/5585.htm>

Here is the point. The Greek language did not contain references to New Testament Scripture. The Greek language existed well before the New Testament was written, and it was written in the common language, the common usage of Greek, not so much the high or specific usages of Greek such as, say, philosophy; it was the ordinary, everyday usage of Greek terms. That is why it was called Koine Greek, from the term *koinónia*⁸ which meant “held in common.” So, these eternal principles that were being introduced to people following the Lord Jesus Christ’s advent into the world, and His ascension, and now the writing of the New Testament, were brand new concepts, without precedent in the Greek language.

So Greek was conscripted, and common things in the Greek language were used to illustrate what these biblical principles would mean. Counting is one such thing. Another one would be *baptizó*,⁹ where the idea was to immerse one thing in another, like a sponge in a bowl of soapy water to clean—the idea being that the thing immersed (the sponge) would be filled with the thing in which it was immersed (the soapy water) and would become a carrier of it so as to clean. The understanding was, of course, that it was the soapy water that did the cleaning, but the sponge was the carrier. You would understand then “baptism in the Spirit”—which is to say the person’s spirit (like a sponge) could be plunged into the Spirit of God, and the person’s spirit would then carry the Spirit of God who was the effective cleansing, the effective agency of God carried within the person. So the notion of “the baptism of the Spirit” never existed before in the Greek language, but the term *baptizó* did, and so the term *baptizó* was conscripted and given this biblical meaning, and by that, persons could understand what “the baptism of the Spirit” meant.

The entire usage of the Greek language in the New Testament is allegorical—this is like that. The truth that was being conveyed in the New Testament was like a common usage term in the Greek language. “Baptism in the Spirit” was like unto baptism, where they would understand the dipping of one thing in another to carry it to a certain place. They would understand that, just like a sponge could be dipped in hot, soapy water to clean, so a person’s spirit may be baptized in the Holy Spirit,

⁸ See *koinónia*, Strong’s Greek 2842 - <https://biblehub.com/greek/2842.htm>

⁹ See *baptizó*, Strong’s Greek 907 - <https://biblehub.com/greek/907.htm>

and the Holy Spirit within the person would become the effective power of God working in and through that person. The Greek language was like that. Hence, the term “count” is used—“count the number of the beast.” The idea here is not *arithmos* or how you might construct something mathematically. It is not that. It is how you might perceive the will of the people in an election. If there were another way to perceive the will of the people in the election, it would be just as useful, but they used this methodology of counting to make a public show as to what the will of the people was—how you may perceive the will of the people and do so accurately.

The principle, then, is to perceive the number of the beast. How then are you going to perceive this number? Obviously, the understanding spoken of is the understanding of Scripture. Through the understanding of Scripture, the only way to perceive the number of the beast was by the understanding that comes from the Holy Spirit. “Here is wisdom. Let him that has understanding *perceive* the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred threescore and six.” Let us go back to the context, verse 16, as we come forward.

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 KJV).

Let us look at the concept, then, of the mark of the beast. We have already touched this in prior discussions. It is the difference between the term *eikón*¹⁰ and the word *charaktér*.¹¹ An *eikón* is to execute something that is a likeness of another; so, you may fashion an *eikón* in likeness of the thing that you wish to represent. But then the word *charaktér* is either an engraving or an instrument of engraving which is to produce a likeness.

¹⁰ See *eikón*, Strong’s Greek 1504 - <https://biblehub.com/greek/1504.htm>

¹¹ See *charaktér*, Strong’s Greek 5481 - <https://biblehub.com/greek/5481.htm>

Before I dive further into that, and we have already addressed this, I would like to speak about the mark itself. Interestingly, of course, the first man to have a mark on him was the man called Cain.¹² Let us start with the idea of the name “Cain.” The name means—by the way, his mother named him—and in Hebrew the word “Cain” signifies or means, “With the help of Jehovah I have brought forth a man.”¹³ Watch the forming of this wave in Scripture: a man with a mark, a man who was given a mark; his name means “man” more than any other man. Now *adam*¹⁴ was the term “man,” as in one taken from the *adamah*,¹⁵ which is the earth. It references more a ruddy fellow, the color of one’s skin and/or one’s relationship to the earth. When Eve defines her son as, “With the help of Jehovah I have brought forth a man,” you need to keep your eye on this man. This is a jealous man; this is a murderous man; this is a competitive man; this man is a killer. This man, above all else, is known for destroying his brother who was called “righteous Abel.”¹⁶ This man is one who destroys the righteous. So it is not just the name “Cain,” but what is implied in Cain is that he is a character who kills the righteous, and he is given a mark.

In Scripture, themes are repeated and often great themes are repeated in bold relief, three times. That is the witness, as it were, of two or three references: at the mouth of two or three witnesses, let every word be established.¹⁷ This is part of the matter of judging that is referenced in the Book of Matthew, the 18th chapter.¹⁸ So you look for the two (at a minimum) or three (to be complete) references to a thing. If the first reference to this man who destroys the righteous is Cain, what

¹² See Genesis 4:15: “And the LORD said to him, ‘Therefore, whoever kills Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold.’ And the LORD set a mark on Cain, lest anyone finding him should kill him.”

¹³ See Genesis 4:1 BSB: “And Adam had relations with his wife Eve, and she conceived and gave birth to Cain. ‘With the help of the LORD I have brought forth a man,’ she said.”

¹⁴ See *adam*, Strong’s Hebrew 120 - <https://biblehub.com/hebrew/120.htm>

¹⁵ See *adamah*, Strong’s Hebrew 127 - <https://biblehub.com/hebrew/127.htm>

¹⁶ See Hebrews 11:4: “By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks.”

See also Matthew 23:35: “...that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar.”

¹⁷ See 2 Corinthians 13:1: “This *will be* the third *time* I am coming to you. ‘By the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established.’” See also Deuteronomy 19:15; Matthew 18:16; Hebrews 10:28.

¹⁸ See Matthew 18:15-20.

might be a second reference? Well, I am going to state it and then establish it for you. It is Babylon, and it is Nebuchadnezzar. And what is the third reference? The third reference is the beast of Revelation, chapter 13, without whose permission one may not buy or sell.¹⁹

There are similar references to the Lamb: engage the lamb of Moses,²⁰ the Lamb of Christ,²¹ and the Lamb slain from the foundations of the earth,²² seen in Revelation, chapters 5 and 13. I will pick up from there as we continue to deconstruct the mystery of why the three references to a man with a mark.

I am Sam Soleyn. We will continue on. Thanks for listening. Bye-bye.

¹⁹ See Revelation 13:16-17: “He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.”

²⁰ See Exodus 12:1-28

²¹ See John 1:29: “The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, ‘Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!’

John 1:35-36: “Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples. And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, ‘Behold the Lamb of God!’”

²² See Revelation 5:6: “And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth.”

Revelation 13:8: “All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”