

## THE SEAL OF GOD AND THE MARK OF THE BEAST

**Introduction** Acts 5 : 29: "We ought to obey God rather than men."

The Bible records many great religious crises of the past, when obedience to God's commandments became a **public test**; when life-or-death decisions had to be made, and a clear line of distinction was drawn between those who served God and those who served Him not.

**Examples:** The Passover (Ex. 12 : 1-23)  
 The Golden Calf (Ex. 32 : 26)  
 Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18 : 21)  
 The Fiery Furnace (Dan. 3 : 13-18)

Great as were these crises, however, they pale into insignificance beside the last, fierce, public clash between truth and error, just before Jesus comes.

The book of Revelation describes two world-wide movements in the last days, one inspired by God, the other inspired by Satan, which will divide the inhabitants of the earth into two camps, and climax in the last great religious crisis of the ages. God's movement concerns the marking of His servants with the "Seal of God", and is predicted in Rev. 7 : 1-3. Satan's movement concerns the stamping of his servants with the "Mark of the Beast", and is predicted in Rev. 13 : 15-17.

The book of Revelation refers again and again to this final clash between the Seal of God and the Mark of the Beast. This is the last public test of loyalty that will ever come to the inhabitants of the earth. The richest of Heaven's blessings are promised to those who receive the Seal of God (Rev. 7 : 15-17; 14 : 1-4), while the most fearful of Heaven's warnings are threatened against those who receive the Mark of the Beast (Rev. 14 : 9-11; 16 : 1-2).

Thank God, we do not need to approach this last great crisis unprepared. It is the privilege of every Christian to learn from the Bible the nature of the final test, to acquaint himself with the issues involved, and to decide now on which side he will stand.

**Discussion** Obviously, when we are dealing with the Seal of God and the Mark of the Beast, we are dealing with a clash of opposites. If we can identify one, we have the key to the identity of the other. Accordingly, our first step will be to identify the Seal of God.

### 1.—WHAT IS THE "SEAL OF GOD"?

Revelation 6 brings us right up to the great day of God's wrath, and asks the searching question: "Who shall be able to stand?" (Rev. 6 : 17).

Revelation 7 answers this question by pointing to a company of people who, in the very last moments of time, receive God's protecting mark—the "Seal of the Living God"—and are thus enabled to stand unharmed in the day of His wrath.

How shall we identify this protecting "Seal"?

(See Charts Nos. 43 and 44, and explain how these help to identify the Seal of God)

#### The Three Elements of a Seal

A seal is a mark or sign of authority, and is used by rulers and officials to make laws and agreements valid. It contains the name, title (or office), and territory of the lawgiver.

#### A Typical Royal Seal

The seal of George VI, a recent King of England. Note the three elements: