



## 14. The Beautiful Seal of God's Ownership

In summer, as we see the trees all clothed with a beautiful mantle of green, we may not distinguish between the evergreens and the other trees. But as the frost king encloses them in his icy embrace, stripping the other trees of their beautiful foliage, the evergreens emerge clearly seen.

This is how it will be with all who are walking in humility, clinging tremblingly to the hand of Christ. Those who are self-confident and trust in themselves will lose their false robe of "righteousness" when the storms of trial come. Those who sincerely love and fear God will wear the robe of Christ's righteousness in adversity as they once did in prosperity.

Self-denial, self-sacrifice, kindness, love, patience, fortitude, are daily fruits borne by those who are truly connected with God. Their acts may not be published to the world, but they are daily wrestling with evil, and gaining precious victories over temptation. The eye of Him who seeth the secrets of the heart, notices every effort put forth in lowliness and meekness. It requires the testing time to reveal the pure gold of love and faith in the character.

That testing time is very near. God will place a precious seal of approval on all who believe in the true Christ and follow Him (the "Lamb") in these last days. What is that seal?

1. What Good News does the third angel give us? Revelation 14:9, 10.

ANSWER: He warns against the worship of "the beast," and receiving "his \_\_\_\_\_."

2. How many will worship the beast? Revelation 13:8.

ANSWER: "And \_\_\_\_\_ that dwell upon the earth shall \_\_\_\_\_ him, whose names are \_\_\_\_\_ in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

We will study about this "mark of the beast" in a later lesson.

3. In contrast, what will those do whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life? Revelation 14:12.

ANSWER: "Here are they that \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_, and the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_."

4. What special work of mercy are four angels in Revelation 7:1 told to do?

ANSWER: Hold "the \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_."

The four angels are working in all the earth to keep God's work from being destroyed by terrible wars and disasters. The angels almost let go their hold on the four winds during World Wars I and II. It is only by their constant restraint that a nuclear World War III has not come.

5. What blessed alternative to the "mark of the beast" does the other angel ascending "from the east" bring with him? Revelation 7:2.

ANSWER: "And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_."

6. What command does he give to the four angels? Revelation 7:2, 3.

ANSWER: "And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we \_\_\_\_\_ the servants of our God in their \_\_\_\_\_."

This message is world-wide. It comes at the end of time. It gives people something important to choose instead of the "mark of the beast." Therefore, it is the same as the first angel's message of Revelation 14:6, 7, 12. The four angels are right now holding back this tornado of human passion. The present is a little lull in the storm; the four winds are satanic fury seething just below the surface, ready to break forth anytime. Thank God they are being held back! These lessons are one agency the Lord is using to place on you that precious "seal of God."

7. Where does Ezekiel say the sealing is to begin? Ezekiel 9:3, 4, 6.

ANSWER: "At my \_\_\_\_\_"

Those who will be sealed will be sighing and crying for the abominations that are done in the land. More especially their prayers will rise in behalf of the church because its members are following the way of the world. They weep before God to see religion despised in the homes of fellow church members. They sorrow because of pride, selfishness, and covetousness and the deceptions that have crept into the churches. The Spirit of God tries to convict of sin while the servants of Satan triumph. God is dishonored as His truth is trampled on. He says in Ezekiel 9:4, "Set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof."

8. In determining who is to receive the seal of the living God, where does God look? 1 Samuel 16:7.

ANSWER: "For the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the \_\_\_\_\_ appearance, but the LORD looks on the \_\_\_\_\_."

9. What does God say He knows? 2 Timothy 2:19.

ANSWER: "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this \_\_\_\_\_, The Lord \_\_\_\_\_ that are \_\_\_\_\_, And, let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from \_\_\_\_\_."

This mark or seal is a sign of victory over all sin. "And they overcame him [the devil, the enemy] by the blood of the Lamb." (Revelation 12:11). In Egypt, as the destroying angel went through the land to slay all the firstborn of the Egyptians, he "passed over" those homes where the mark of blood was placed on the doorpost (Exodus 12:7, 12, 13). So, in the final destruction, the destroying angels are commanded, "... come not near any one upon whom is the mark" (Ezekiel 9:6). The "seal of God" is therefore the mark identifying God's people as His.

10. Who applies the seal? Ephesians 4:30.

ANSWER: "And grieve not the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_, whereby ye are \_\_\_\_\_ unto the day of redemption." (The Holy Spirit applies the seal, but is not the seal itself.)

11. Where does the Holy Spirit place the seal? Revelation 14:1.

ANSWER: "And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Zion, and with him a hundred forty and four thousand, having his \_\_\_\_\_ written in their \_\_\_\_\_."

The "Father's name" must represent His character of pure, unselfish love. When God's people learn to love like God loves, they will have His name in their foreheads. Their love for God is expressed in obedience to the first four commandments, their love to their fellow men, in the last six.

12. How is true love revealed? Romans 13:10.

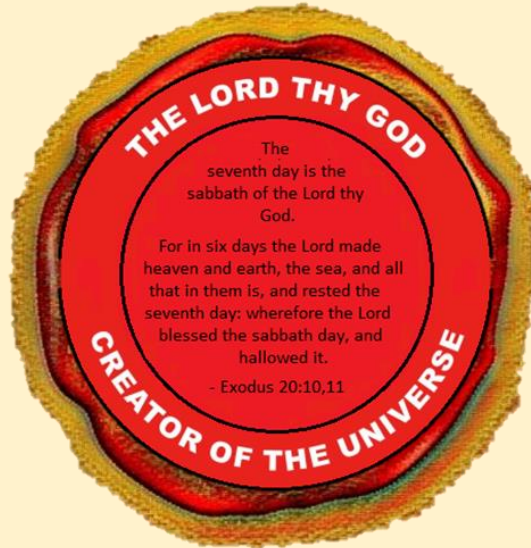
ANSWER: "Love worketh \_\_\_\_\_ to his neighbor; therefore \_\_\_\_\_ is the \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_."

If we profess to love, but do not fulfil the law of God, we deny the seal of God. And if we profess to keep God's commandments, but do not reveal love in our lives, we deny the Holy Spirit who impresses the seal upon God's people, because "the fruit of the Spirit is love" (Galatians 5:22).

13. A seal is a sign of authority associated with the laws of government. "The writing which is written in the king's name, and sealed with the king's ring, may no man reverse" (Esther 8:8). Queen Esther knew that if King Ahasuerus sealed the writing of the Persian law, it could never again be changed. Where does God say His seal is to be found? Isaiah 8:16.

ANSWER: "Bind up the testimony, \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ among my disciples."

14. A "seal" is the same as a personal signature. Where do you find the Lord's "signature" in His law? Exodus 20:8-11.



ANSWER: "Remember the \_\_\_\_\_, to keep it holy."

A seal must have three details in order to be legal: (1) The name of the law-giver; (2) his position, or authority; and (3) the territory over which he rules. For example, the Queen of England's seal would read, "Elizabeth (name) Queen (position or authority) of Great Britain, and the Commonwealth (territory)." Where can we find the seal of God in His law? Only the Sabbath commandment contains all three essentials:

(1) "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God" (name of the law-giver); (2) "in six days the Lord made" (His position or authority, He is the Creator); (3) "heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them" (the territory over which He rules). Note: A sign and a seal are the same (Romans 4:11).

15. What does Ezekiel say is the "signature" or "sign" ("seal") of the Lord? Ezekiel 20:12, 20.

ANSWER: "I gave them \_\_\_\_\_, to be a \_\_\_\_\_ between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that \_\_\_\_\_." "And hallow my \_\_\_\_\_; and they shall be a \_\_\_\_\_ between me and you, that ye may know that I am the Lord \_\_\_\_\_."

True Sabbath-keeping means deep conversion to Christ. To receive the seal of God is to receive the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart, a "rest" from sin and self: "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His" (Hebrews 4:9, 10). Our own works are works of pride and love of self.

And as soon as one receives the "everlasting gospel" brought by the angel messenger, he begins to keep the Sabbath, because he loves and worships his Creator and Redeemer.

The issue is loyalty to God. The appeal made by the "beast" is to the love of self. Those who choose to die to self and to bear the cross with Christ will gain the victory over the "beast" and his "image" and his "mark." The "mark of the beast" is opposed to the cross of Christ; and the true Sabbath of the Lord is therefore the sign of bearing the cross.

16. Here is a list of the characteristics of the 144,000, those who receive the seal of the living God: Revelation 14:1-5.

(a) They were "\_\_\_\_\_ (vs 4) from among men." (b) They "sung as it were a \_\_\_\_\_ before the throne." (vs. 3) (c) They "are \_\_\_\_\_ (vs 5) before the throne of God." (d) In "their mouths was \_\_\_\_\_." (vs. 5) (e) For "they are \_\_\_\_\_ (vs. 4) [a pure, true church, or people]."

This special group gain an experience not gained by any previous generation of God's people. They open their hearts fully to receive Christ's salvation from sin, so that it can be truthfully said of them, "They are without fault" (Revelation 14:5). They were born in sin just as everybody else in the world has been born in sin: yet they have permitted the great High Priest to cleanse their hearts of all evil.

They have become honest, because "in their mouths was found no guile." In their experience will be demonstrated the truth that He "is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him" (Hebrews 7:25). In their characters will be seen the practical results of Christ's closing work in the heavenly sanctuary.

The 144,000 are a group who have joyfully received all the guidance that Christ has sent to His people. They have submitted to the Holy Spirit so that He could work a complete change in their lives. Even their habits of eating and drinking, dressing, amusements, their thoughts and purposes, have been brought into harmony with Jesus' example.

Whether it is a literal or symbolic number, they will be living when Jesus comes.

17. What glorious picture of triumph do we see at last? Revelation 15:2-4.

ANSWER: "And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the \_\_\_\_\_, and over his \_\_\_\_\_, and over his \_\_\_\_\_, and over the \_\_\_\_\_ of his \_\_\_\_\_, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God."

Ever before Him, Christ saw the result of His mission. His earthly life was full of toil and self-sacrifice, but He was cheered by the thought that He would not have all this travail for nothing. By giving His life for us, He stored in humanity the image of God. He would lift us up from the dust, reshape the character after the pattern of His own, and make it beautiful with His own glory.

18. Does your heart say, "Lord, I want that seal. Please cleanse me, prepare me to be loyal to Christ in earth's closing history"? \_\_\_\_\_.

"Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you." 1 Peter 5:7 "Pray without ceasing." 1 Thessalonians 5:17

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