

**FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION:**

1. Why are some so quick to label certain technologies “the mark of the beast”? What fears or concerns are under then?
2. Orthodox Christians believe Jesus will return literally, visibly, physically one day to usher in a new creation. How hard is it for you to believe this, why?
3. Read some of the core passages and discuss.
4. Revelation is more about instructing the church than about telling the future. It is an instruction about worship of the Lamb - Jesus. How does this change our reading?

**MARK OF THE BEAST? MARK OF THE LAMB?**

As our province requires people to be vaccinated to access certain services and spaces an old track of end-times prophecy sermons starts to play in the back of my mind. Revelation 13:17 says "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."

How do we respond to governments when they introduce increasing restrictions (always in the name of the public good)? What tensions do we need to live with, and when do we say "no"?

**Revelation 13:11-14:3**

**NAB Statement of Faith**

9. We believe God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring all things to their appropriate end and establish the new heaven and the new earth (Ephesians 1:9-10, Revelation 21:1). The certain hope of the Christian is that Jesus Christ will return to the earth suddenly, personally, and visibly in glory according to His promise (Titus 2:13; Revelation 1:7; 3:11; John 14:1-3). The dead will be raised, and Christ will judge mankind in righteousness (John 5:28-29). The unrighteous will be consigned to the everlasting punishment prepared for the devil and his angels (Matthew 25:41, 46; Revelation 20:10). The righteous, in their resurrected and glorified bodies, will receive their reward and dwell forever with the Lord (Philippians 3:20-21; 2 Corinthians 5:10; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).

**TAKING OFF**

THE END IS COMING! - Apocalyptic Fever is Everywhere.

- Secular/Non-Religious End-Times Stories
- My Religious Story + A Thief in the Night

## THE FLIGHT

### We are in the Last Days...

*"With the movement of St. John the Baptist, and especially with the life, Cross and Resurrection of Christ, the eschata, the new age began; the kingdom of God was inaugurated. But from the perspective of the Church, the "last things" in themselves are expected to take place mainly in the future, at the glorious Parousia, that is, at the Second Coming, the future appearance of the Lord in glory (Mt. 24:30; 1 Thess. 1:10; 4:16-18; 1 Tim. 6:14-15). It is then and there that we will have the fullness of the eternal kingdom of God; when we will experience a perfect koinonia communion with God in Christ, as our soul yearns it. This is the height and the depth of our faith and the wealth of glory that awaits us (Eph. 1:17-18)."*

### Mark of the Beast explainer Revelation 13:16-18

There is no unintentional "getting the mark of the beast". "the mark of the beast is most likely a sign that identifies you as something you already are—namely wicked and evil, a person of the dragon."

Antichrist figures are those that bring persecution and/or deceive. Throughout church history these have been identified with various figures such as popes, politicians like Napoleon, Hitler, Stalin, Mussolini, Khrushchev, Saddam Hussein, JFK, Pope John Paul II—the last few suffered wounds to the head (125, Gorman, RRR).

Hexakosioihexekontachexaphobia and 666 in Revelation 13.

- gematria: ancient practice of assigning significance to the mathematical sum of letters in a word in system where letters are used to represent numerals. Hebrew, Greek, Latin.
- Emperor Nero, in Hebrew: "NRWN QSR" reading right to left, and using Hebrew gematria

SUM	Resh (ר)	Samech (ס)	Qof (ק)	Nun (נ/ן)	Waw (ו)	Resh (ר)	Nun (נ/ן)
	R	S	Q	N	W	R	N
666	200	60	100	50	6	200	50

## What Does the Mark of the Beast Tell Us?

Christian responses to centralizing powers

The Babylonian - "Peace and Security"

- "Pax Romana," which literally means "Roman peace," refers to the time period from 27 B.C.E. to 180 C.E. in the Roman Empire.

How do we compare the "Babylons" we live under? What makes Babylon better?

### Is this the end? Jesus and John on the last days...

*1 John 2:18 Children, it is the last hour, and just as you heard that the antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have appeared. We know from this that it is the last hour. 19 They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us because if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us. But they went out from us to demonstrate that all of them do not belong to us.*

## LANDING THE PLANE

### The Mark of the Lamb?

*Rev. 7:1-8, 14:1 "Then I looked, and here was the Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with him were 144,000, who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads." The 144,000 represent the entire community of the redeemed.*

### The Return of the King/Bridegroom Matthew 25:1-13 Therefore stay alert because you do not know the day or the hour.

*"Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus Who was taken up from you into heaven will come in the same way as you saw Him go up into heaven (Acts 1:11)."*

*"Maranatha Come, Lord" (1 Cor. 16:22; Rev. 22:20; 1 Pet. 1:3-12)*

The General Resurrection 1 Thessalonians 4:15-18

### "Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Ready"

## FINAL WORD

Vicit Agnus Noster, Eum Sequamur - "Our Lamb has conquered; let us follow him"