

The Sign and The Seal

As we continue to get closer to the second coming of Christ many issues will become clearer to us. The Lord will illuminate his word and the words of his prophets. They both will become brighter and brighter. There is a verse in Isaiah that I do believe makes reference to this.

Isaiah 30:26

Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound.

There are many things we have heard about in our christian experience but don't have a full understanding of it. We have grown up in the church and they have become cliches. For those who did not grow up in church, these things may have come to us by the way from those who don't even have a good understanding of the subject matter.

We want in this study to discuss very important issues that everyone will face, and that is, accepting the seal of God or accepting the mark of the beast. We want to first look at the Sign and the Seal of God. Are they one and the same, can they be used interchangeably or should they be used interchangeably. You may have heard that the Sabbath is the Sign of loyalty to God or you may have heard that the Sabbath is the Seal of God. Does it make a difference as to how I look at it. I do believe it does and I hope that in this study we can get a better view of what God has shown us. Let us first consider what the Bible has to say concerning this issue.

The Sign

Exodus 31: 12-18

12 And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

13 Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you.

14 Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people.

15 Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord: whosoever doeth any work in the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death.

16 Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant.

17 It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed.

18 And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God.

Ezekiel 20: 1-22

And it came to pass in the seventh year, in the fifth month, the tenth day of the month, that certain of the elders of Israel came to enquire of the Lord, and sat before me.

2 Then came the word of the Lord unto me, saying,

3 Son of man, speak unto the elders of Israel, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Are ye come to enquire of me? As I live, saith the Lord God, I will not be enquired of by you.

4 Wilt thou judge them, son of man, wilt thou judge them? cause them to know the abominations of their fathers:

5 And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; In the day when I chose Israel, and lifted up mine hand unto the seed of the house of Jacob, and made myself known unto them in the land of Egypt, when I lifted up mine hand unto them, saying, I am the Lord your God;

6 In the day that I lifted up mine hand unto them, to bring them forth of the land of Egypt into a land that I had espied for them, flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all lands:

7 Then said I unto them, Cast ye away every man the abominations of his eyes, and defile not yourselves with the idols of Egypt: I am the Lord your God.

8 But they rebelled against me, and would not hearken unto me: they did not every man cast away the abominations of their eyes, neither did they forsake the idols of Egypt: then I said, I will pour out my fury upon them, to accomplish my anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt.

9 But I wrought for my name's sake, that it should not be polluted before the heathen, among whom they were, in whose sight I made myself known unto them, in bringing them forth out of the land of Egypt.

10 Wherefore I caused them to go forth out of the land of Egypt, and brought them into the wilderness.

11 And I gave them my statutes, and shewed them my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them.

12 Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them.

13 But the house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness: they walked not in my statutes, and they despised my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them; and my sabbaths they greatly polluted: then I said, I would pour out my fury upon them in the wilderness, to consume them.

14 But I wrought for my name's sake, that it should not be polluted before the heathen, in whose sight I brought them out.

15 Yet also I lifted up my hand unto them in the wilderness, that I would not bring them into the land which I had given them, flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all lands;

16 Because they despised my judgments, and walked not in my statutes, but polluted my sabbaths: for their heart went after their idols.

17 Nevertheless mine eye spared them from destroying them, neither did I make an end of them in the wilderness.

18 But I said unto their children in the wilderness, Walk ye not in the statutes of your fathers, neither observe their judgments, nor defile yourselves with their idols:

19 I am the Lord your God; walk in my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them;

20 And hallow my sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I am the Lord your God.

21 Notwithstanding the children rebelled against me: they walked not in my statutes, neither kept my judgments to do them, which if a man do, he shall even live in them; they polluted my sabbaths: then I said, I would pour out my fury upon them, to accomplish my anger against them in the wilderness.

22 Nevertheless I withdrew mine hand, and wrought for my name's sake, that it should not be polluted in the sight of the heathen, in whose sight I brought them forth.

The Seal

Revelation 7: 1-4

And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.

2 And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,

3 Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.

4 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.

Revelation 14: 1

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.

From the Bible we see that the Sabbath is the Sign and that God is the one that Sanctifies us and that the Seal of God is his name. At this point we are still gathering information and we will now go to the Prophet to see what insight the Lord has given her.

The Sign

Quote - Counsels for the Church Ch. 47 - The Observance of God's Holy Sabbath pg.261.2

When the Lord delivered His people Israel from Egypt and committed to them His law, He taught them that by the observance of the Sabbath they were to be distinguished from idolaters. It was this that made the distinction between those who acknowledge the sovereignty of God and those who refuse to accept Him as their Creator and King. "It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever," the Lord said. "Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant." Exodus 31:17, 16.

Quote - Counsels for the Church Ch. 47 - The Observance of God's Holy Sabbath pg.261.3

As the Sabbath was the sign that distinguished Israel when they came out of Egypt to enter the earthly Canaan, so it is the sign that now distinguishes God's people as they come out from the world to enter the heavenly rest. The Sabbath is a sign of the relationship existing between God and His people, a sign that they honor His law. It distinguishes between His loyal subjects and transgressors.

Quote - Counsels for the Church Ch. 47 - The Observance of God's Holy Sabbath pg.261.3

From the pillar of cloud Christ declared concerning the Sabbath: "Verily My Sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you." Exodus 31:13. The Sabbath given to the world as the sign of God as the Creator is also the sign of Him as the Sanctifier. The power that created all things is the power that re-creates the soul in His own likeness. To those who keep holy the Sabbath day it is the sign of sanctification. True sanctification is harmony with God, oneness with Him in character. It is received through obedience to those principles that are the transcript of His character. And the Sabbath is the sign of obedience. He who from the heart obeys the fourth commandment will obey the whole law. He is sanctified through obedience.

The Seal

Quote - Letter 45, 1900

Seventh-day Sabbath to Be Emphasized.—There are many places where the means should have been appropriated to make aggressive warfare in cities and towns in connection with tent efforts, and raise up churches which should be as memorials of truth and righteousness. Every stroke should tell for God and His holy Sabbath. That is to stand out in all our work distinctly and pronounced, to be a witness that the seventh day is the sign, the seal of God.

Quote - Great Controversy Ch. 40 - God's People Delivered pg.640.1

The enemies of God's law, from the ministers down to the least among them, have a new conception of truth and duty. Too late they see that the Sabbath of the fourth commandment is the seal of the living God. Too late they see the true nature of their spurious sabbath and the sandy foundation upon which they have been building. They find that they have been fighting against God. Religious teachers have led souls to perdition while professing to guide them to the gates of Paradise. Not until the day of final accounts will it be known how great is the responsibility of men in holy office and how terrible are the results of their unfaithfulness. Only in eternity can we rightly estimate the loss of a single soul. Fearful will be the doom of him to whom God shall say: Depart, thou wicked servant.

So we see that from the Spirit of prophecy the Sabbath is viewed both as a Sign and as a Seal. So what are we to make of this. How do we get a better understanding of this. Well the Spirit of Prophecy does not stop there, much more has been said.

I also want us to get an even clearer picture of the Sabbath and its significance. The Sabbath is referred to as a Sign but the word Sign can also be used interchangeably in the same way as Mark. The Sign of God is the same as the Mark of God.

Quote - Counsels on Health - Closing on the Sabbath pg.489.1

The question has been asked, “Should our restaurants be opened on the Sabbath?” My answer is, No, no! The observance of the Sabbath is our witness to God—the mark, or sign, between Him and us that we are His people. Never is this mark to be obliterated.

The Sign of God is the Sabbath, the Mark of God is the Sabbath and we see also the the Seal of God is also referred to as the Sabbath.

Quote - Great Controversy 1888 - pg.691.1

In Ezekiel 9:4 the word used in the original is translated mark Gesenius says, “a mark, sign.” The Septuagint gives the same word in this text that is given in the Greek of Romans 4:11, rendered “sign.” Thus the words sign, mark, and seal are applied to the same things, or used as of like signification, in the scriptures.

Now does this bring any more clarity, maybe, maybe not but there is more.

Quote - Eternity Past pg.212.4

The Sabbath is not introduced as a new institution but as having been founded at creation. Pointing to God as the Maker of the heavens and the earth, it distinguishes the true God from false gods. Thus the Sabbath is the sign of man's allegiance to God. The fourth commandment is the only one of the ten in which are found both the name and the title of the Lawgiver, the only one that shows by whose authority the law is given. Thus it contains the seal of God.

Quote - Last Day Events - Ch.15 The Seal of God and the Mark of the Beast

Just as soon as the people of God are sealed in their foreheads—it is not any seal or mark that can be seen, but a settling into the truth, both intellectually and spiritually, so they cannot be moved—just as soon as God's people are sealed and prepared for the shaking, it will come. Indeed, it has begun already.—The S.D.A. Bible Commentary 4:1161 (1902). LDE 219.4

The seal of the living God is placed upon those who conscientiously keep the Sabbath of the Lord.—The S.D.A. Bible Commentary 7:980 (1897). [This statement and others like it should be understood in the light of passages quoted earlier in the chapter, indicating that God holds people responsible only for the knowledge they have or which they could obtain.] LDE 220.1

Those who would have the seal of God in their foreheads must keep the Sabbath of the fourth commandment.—The S.D.A. Bible Commentary 7:970 (1899). LDE 220.2

True observance of the Sabbath is the sign of loyalty to God.—The S.D.A. Bible Commentary 7:981 (1899). LDE 220.3

The fourth commandment alone of all the ten contains the seal of the great Lawgiver, the Creator of the heavens and the earth.—Testimonies for the Church 6:350 (1900). LDE 220.4

The observance of the Lord's memorial, the Sabbath instituted in Eden, the seventh-day Sabbath, is the test of our loyalty to God.—Letter 94, 1900. LDE 220.5

A mark is placed upon every one of God's people, just as verily as a mark was placed over the doors of the Hebrew dwellings to preserve the people from the general ruin. God declares, “I gave them My sabbaths, to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them” [Ezekiel 20:12].—The S.D.A. Bible Commentary 7:969 (1900). LDE 220.6

Quote - Great Controversy Ch.26 A work of reform pg.452.1

The Lord commands by the same prophet: “Bind up the testimony, seal the law among My disciples.” Isaiah 8:16. The seal of God's law is found in the fourth commandment. This only, of all the ten, brings to view both the name and the title of the Lawgiver. It declares Him to be the Creator of the heavens and the earth, and thus shows His claim to reverence and worship above all others. Aside from this precept, there is nothing in the Decalogue to show by whose authority the law is given. When the Sabbath was changed by the papal power, the seal was taken from the law. The disciples of Jesus are called upon to restore it by exalting the Sabbath of the fourth commandment to its rightful position as the Creator's memorial and the sign of His authority.

The Sabbath contains the Seal of God as is clearly stated. So the Sabbath is considered the Seal of God because it contains the name and title of God. Now I do not propose to create an argument over whether or not the Sabbath is the Sign or a Seal, however if we consider that the Sabbath is the Sign of God that contains his Seal then our approach to it will be different. A Sign points us to our destination but if we cannot identify the sign we never arrive at our destination and if we can see the sign but don't understand it we will still lose our way. Many believe that the Sabbath is it,

they will be sealed because they don't work on the Sabbath, but many will be lost while claiming to keep the Sabbath. If we understand that the Sabbath is a Sign, which points us to the owner of the Seal then the Sabbath in itself is not the destination but it shows us the way.

Quote - Christian Experience and Training Ch.32 Preparing for the Judgement pg.189.1

Not all who profess to keep the Sabbath will be sealed. There are many even among those who teach the truth to others who will not receive the seal of God in their foreheads. They had the light of truth, they knew their Master's will, they understood every point of our faith, but they had not corresponding works. These who were so familiar with prophecy and the treasures of divine wisdom, should have acted their faith. They should have commanded their households after them, that by a well-ordered family they might present to the world the influence of the truth upon the human heart.

Quote - Counsels for the Church - Attending School on Sabbath pg.269.1

If parents allow their children to receive an education with the world, and make the Sabbath a common day, then the seal of God cannot be placed upon them. They will be destroyed with the world; and will not their blood rest upon the parents? But if we faithfully teach our children God's commandments, bring them into subjection to parental authority, and then by faith and prayer commit them to God, he will work with our efforts; for he has promised it. And when the overflowing scourge shall pass through the land, they with us may be hidden in the secret of the Lord's pavilion.484 CCh 269.1

The Bible tells us that the Seal of God is his name. What is significant about the name of God. Well, it is the Sign of his Authority.

Exodus 6:3

And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the **name of God** Almighty, but by my **name** Jehovah was I not known to them.

The name Jehovah is derived from the Hebrew name YHWY, known as the tetragrammaton. The Jews never spake God's name lest they defile it. They never wrote it down lest someone who did not know what it was should defile it. God's name is sacred.

Exodus 20:7

Thou shalt not take the **name of** the Lord thy **God** in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his **name** in vain.

Exodus 23:13

And in all things that I have said unto you be circumspect: and make no mention **of** the **name of** other **gods**, neither let it be heard out **of** thy mouth.

Does it mean therefore that there is a specific name of God that should be revered above all others. The short answer is no. Any name, phrase or word that can be used to reference the Almighty God, when they are used in context to him must be done so with reverence. For instance the term God can be used to refer to the Lord God Almighty, that is, God the Father, but it can also refer to idols. Whenever we use the word God to refer to the God of the Bible it should be done so with reverence, but when used to refer to an idol no reverence should be given. There are more specific names given to God like **Jehovah Jireh**, these names describe certain attributes of God and should be used with reverence.

Exodus 23: 20-22

Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared.

21 Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions: for my name is in him.

22 But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak; then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries.

This is significant because the Angel that the Lord told Israel he was sending before them was authorized by him, how did they know this. This Angel had God's name in him. This Angel was Christ before his incarnation.

Deuteronomy 12:3-5

3 And ye shall overthrow their altars, and break their pillars, and burn their groves with fire; and ye shall hew down the graven images of their gods, and destroy the names of them out of that place.

4 Ye shall not do so unto the Lord your God.

5 But unto the place which the Lord your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put his name there, even unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come:

Deuteronomy 18:20

But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die. **Jeremiah 28:10-17**

1 Kings 18:24

And call ye on the **name of** your **gods**, and I will call on the **name of** the Lord: and the **God** that answereth by fire, let him be **God**. And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken.

Psalms 20:7

Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the **name of** the Lord our **God**.

Ezekiel 20: 1-22

Ezekiel 39:7

So will I make my holy name known in the midst of my people Israel; and I will not let them pollute my holy name any more: and the heathen shall know that I am the Lord, the Holy One in Israel.

The name of God among his people lets those around know who God is and who his people are.

Isaiah 12:6

Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee.

Revelation 16:9

And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory.

The name of God is significant. Where God's name dwells he defends. Where God's name is his law will be established, that is why the Sabbath is the Seal of the law. Where God name dwells his character will be seen.

1 Corinthians 6:19

What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

Our bodies are the temple of God and as such his name should dwell in us. According to revelation his name should be in our hearts, we know that our hearts refer to our minds.

Heart/Mind - Daniel 5:20, Hebrews 8:10

So God's name dwelling in us means that we are his totally, wholly and solely. Therefore we cannot be moved. Thus we are sealed. Thus we are settled into the truth. That is why the Sabbath is referred to as the Seal of the law or as the Seal of God because it contains his name.

The name of God will be in the hearts or minds of all his servants.

So to Summarize everything. The Sabbath is the Sign that contains the Seal of God, that points us to the owner of the Seal. Keeping the Sabbath does not mean we will receive the Seal. To receive the Seal, The Name of God which represents his presence, means the Holy Ghost, must dwell in us and transform us, which is the sanctification process. Another way to describe this sanctification process is righteousness by faith. The Sabbath will be the Sign that we are loyal to God.

At this point in time does the Sabbath separate the true worshippers of God from the false.

No.

There are those who are not now keeping the Sabbath but are children of God, awaiting the call. To come out of Babylon. There are those now keeping the Sabbath that will leave the fold and go to Babylon. What will be the turning point that will truly separate the two groups. The National Sunday Law.

S.D.A's who are not sealed will leave the fold of God. Those who remain will receive the latter rain and will proclaim the gospel and those who are God's will come out of Babylon. So Again the Seal of God which is his Name is contained in The Sabbath of the fourth commandment. The Sabbath is the Sign that God is the one that sanctifies us. It will then reveal those who truly belong to God.

My intention is not to create a controversy but that we could gain a clearer understanding of the final process, the sealing process, as we reach nearer to the coming of Christ.

The Sealing process involves daily living. The Seal of God is not a bar code that you receive and then you live however you want after that, because you have the stamp. When we hear the Seal of God the first thing that must come to our mind, is walking with God daily. Walking with God is talking to him through prayer(1Thess. 5:17), studying Gods word to know him more (2Tim 3:15-17), sharing the love that he has revealed to you with others(Matt. 25:40).

I therefore conclude that we should not be afraid when we hear the terms, Seal of God or Mark of the Beast. If we have decided, that we will not walk with God, then will our fear come.

I have in no way exhausted the topic but I do hope that we continue to study the Word of God and with prayer may we have a clearer vision of who he is.