“That no man might buy or sell.” Interpreted in a spiritual context.

"Revelation 13:15-17
*“:.and **cause all who refused to worship the image to be killed**. 16 It also forced all people, great and small, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hands or on their foreheads, 17 **so that they could not buy or sell unless they had the mark**, which is the name of the beast or the number of its name.”*

Let us have a look at the original Greek words for “buy and sell”:

Buy:
ἀγοράσαι (agorasai)

Strong's 59: To buy. From agora; properly, to go to market, i.e. to purchase; specially, to redeem.

Sell:
πωλῆσαι (pōlēsai)

póleó: to exchange or barter, to sell

Probably ultimately from **pelomai** (to be busy, to trade); to barter

- From Strong's Concordance

So the trading or business here does not have to involve money or finances I think.

So, in a deeper, spiritual interpretation, could this refer to the activities, marketing and business of those who carry the true light /doctrines towards the end of time?
As Christ said in Luke 2:49-52*: “And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be **about my Father's business?”***

That they are being sought stopped and discouraged by various means, and often concealed, or made popular, by the hearts and minds of those who refuse to advance forward and receiving the fuller truth made available for the later end of the age.

Notice that we live in a close to global society online with the internet (WWW). Most people of the world know or understand English, and those who do not have the English skills, have the option of using the translate tool on fb or copy/paste text in to "Google translate" for a quick and often quite satisfying result.

So much of this is taking place in the global society we have online, hence why we need to keep this in mind in how we interpret. Leaders in the churches and faith are not only those who are officially pastors, but it could also be those administering various groups on the worldwide, social media platform like faith based Facebook groups.

Some history:

2The Greater Cultural Implications

The word used in Revelation for "mark" was the Greek word charagma. A charagma was the image of the emperor's head that was put on all Roman coins, and stamps on official documents. This contributes to the idea that those who participated in the emperor cult of Rome would profit by greater economic opportunity. ***A "good" Roman who worshiped the emperor would have more opportunity in society as opposed to those odd Christians who shunned cultural norms. Christians would become outcasts who were considered "persona non grata" in the business world. Christians would be shunned from the important relationships of trade*** *where money was made. This is likely the issue of Revelation 13:16-17.*

This reality is true even today. In Uzbekistan for instance, there is a term for Uzbeks who choose to follow the ways of Christianity, which is considered outside of the Uzbek culture. The term is, sotgan. It is a derogatory label cast upon those Uzbeks who follow the Christian religion taught by "outsiders." Sotgans lose their ability to buy and sell because no one wants to do business with them. Becoming a Christian is not socially accepted, by and large, and puts a great financial strain on Christians. In many countries, Christians are the poorest people in the town because no one wants to do business with them. This relational market economy is played out all the time. Even here in the U.S. it is common for people to want to do business with those whom they share some ideals and have some connection. This economic phenomenon is greatly increased in cultures with more familial and community cohesion.

Thus, those who did not worship the emperor in Rome became outcasts and were not able to buy and sell using the Emperor's "mark" (charagma), and nor would they want to. By this, early Christians would reject the emperor and his money. The Christian communities would thus end up sticking very close together and trading with each other.
*If this issue is playing a role in the mark of the beast****, it is a window into the social treatment of believers who abstained from pagan and emperor worship in that society****."*
-From Discoverfirst.com

Pagan worship here is those who worship the beast and Babylon. We have seen from previous studies that all false/ fallen faiths, including Christian churches and world religions like Islam, Buddhism, Judaism etc, in their doctrines, and even secular humanism all belong under the banner of the old, immature, fallen law, covenant and order. Here we also see both the king of the North and the king of the South philosophies (left liberals and right conservatives, including in the churches)."

Keep in mind: **We fight a spiritual battle with spiritual swords and armor.**

Ephesians 6:12

*"For **our struggle is not against flesh and blood**, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and **against the spiritual forces** of evil in the heavenly realms."*

Persecution and killing in the last days:

***""**:.**and** cause **ALL** who refused to worship the image to be killed."* Revelation 13:15

***"Then you will be handed over to be** persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations **because of me**."* **Matthew 24:9**

Thinking how much we have seen that is spiritual by now**,** the killing could refer to character assassination of the redeemed. **Take the attack on Ellen White as an example and how she has been basically character assassinated by the Psychology of this world, several times and maybe the worst attack happening in the year 2021. We see how the lower wisdom is being used against the higher wisdom of God to attack and condemn the true Christians.** This is contrary to the higher justice and court system of the kingdom of God. See 1 Cor 2.

The text in Revelation 13:15 that speak of the last days states that ALL who refuse to worship the image of the beast will be killed. Yet we know that there is still a remnant who will not die the first death at the end of the age before Christ returns. In other words then it makes even more sense that we do not speak of literal murder, but rather attempted spiritual murder, namely character assassination. We also know that Ellen White prophecied that this world's psychology would be used in the latter end of the age, right before the close of probation to attack and seek to destroy Christ and His followers in the last great controversy.

"number of the beast, for it is the number of a man. That number is 666.»
Revelation 13:18

Here we see how the beast and (hu)man is connected. The law and spirit of the natural man/ the flesh/ self/ the world= the moral character = the moral image of the unsanctified human. = the image of the beast. 666 is also the unholy trinity: the dragon, the beast and the false prophet. Here we also see the expression *"man of sin"* (2. Tess 2:3) which is the unsanctified human filled significantly with the law and spirit of 666 and under its order, the order of the old, immature, fallen law, and covenant, the order of the beast, the physical, literal kingdom of this world.

I think we have seen it demonstrated in the fullest sense, that if this world should rely on the market forces and democracy, where fallen creation make all the decisions, it will result in chaos and destruction and death. Both literally and spiritually.

So what does God represent? God represent free will and choice, but that we are to understand and take responsibility for our actions and understanding that our choices will have consequences. Either for life or death. This is in part what it means to go from the letter to the spirit of the law. And that we should think more closely before we just go ahead and contribute to the pollutions we see spreading all around us. It is a rebellious and ruthless, unrestrained, mindless society. **And the spiritual pollution of what we fill our minds and hearts with is by far the worse. This spiritual pollution is sadly not only limited to the world, but also the churches. This hinder present truth from arriving and reaching peoples' hearts and minds. So we see that the greatest hindrance to the truth and light is the fallen or immature, unsanctified characters of creation (both angels and mankind, the nature of the beast, of 666).**

So it appears that it is indeed the actions of the beastly character of fallen nature of the great majority that hinder the *"buying and selling"* of those who are in the business and "marketing" (evangelism) of the fuller Truth as it is in Jesus Christ, the everlasting gospel. As a natural consequence and fruit of unrighteousness and self righteousness. The beast and Babylon.

Other passages where the business of buying has an obvious spiritual, not literal meaning:

See Revelation chapter 3 verse 18:
"I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire*, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see.»*

Notice: I am not claiming there will not be a literal fulfilment with regards to the ***"buying and selling"*** in relation to possible enforced Sunday laws, but I think the time is ripe for a deeper interpretation also here.