

## SABBATH THOUGHT 2026-03-07—MARK OF THE BEAST

May God bless you on His Sabbath day!

There have been numerous speculations about the Mark of the Beast. They morph over time as new technologies are announced but many refer to some form of digital ID or chip implants or worse. While this can be interesting, what does the Bible say about the Mark? Who will have it? What is its purpose? What will it be?

REVELATION 13:15-17 He [*the False Prophet*] was granted *power* to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause **as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed.** 16 **He [*the False Prophet*] causes all,** both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, **to receive a mark on [G1909 = epi] their right hand or on [G1909 = epi] their foreheads,** 17 and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the **mark** or the **name** of the beast, or the **number** of his name.

The Mark is not given to those who refuse to worship the Image of the Beast; they are killed so there is a choice—whether or not to worship the Beast. Specifically, the Mark identifies those who: 1) worship the Beast, and 2) are authorized to do business within the Beast system. It is like requiring an ID that proves citizenship before someone votes—it bars non-citizens. Continuing in the next chapter:

REVELATION 14:9-10 Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, **“If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives [*takes hold of*] his mark on [G1909 = epi] his forehead or on [G1909 = epi] his hand,** 10 “he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. **He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone** in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.

God’s judgment is upon anyone who worships the Beast and his Image and receives the Mark of his name. Those who refuse are killed but, notably, they do not have the Mark. Therefore, the Mark only identifies those who WORSHIP the Beast. The Mark 1) is only given those who worship the Beast, 2) is received after choosing to worship the Beast, 3) identifies those who worship the Beast, and 4) does not force worship of the Beast. The choice is worship of the Beast not receiving the Mark. It is given as a matter of course to those who choose to worship him. Granted, it is a difficult choice because refusal means almost certain death but it is still a choice.

The Greek word for *mark* means a *stamp* or *imprint* made by something with a sharp point; similar to tattoos. Notice that the Mark is “**on**” (G1909 = *e*pi = *on*, *upon*, or *above*) the hand or forehead (Rev. 13:16; 14:9). The Mark is an outward, visible sign that others can recognize. If it was subcutaneous, then the Greek word en, meaning *in*, *within*, or *among*, would have been used. So, speculations of various implantable devices or injectable nanorobots does not fit the description. Whether or not the Mark is a form of digital ID, chip implants, digital currency, or some other technology is actually irrelevant. It also does not matter if it is some

form of mind-control because those who receive the Mark choose to worship the Beast BEFORE receiving it. If the Mark forced people to worship the Beast, then why would God judge anyone who has no choice in the matter? The choice is to worship the Beast, not whether to receive the Mark.

While the Mark identifies those who worship the Beast, it has other significance beyond commerce. Satan counterfeits many of God's ways. His holidays Halloween (All Hallows' *Eve*) and Christmas *Eve* begin and end at sundown the same as God's holydays. He also has his own bible, known as the Quran, and his own law called Sharia Law. He imitates the roles of God and Jesus Christ perhaps by the Beast and False Prophet (another possibility is those roles are fulfilled by himself and the Beast). Satan also counterfeits God by using the Mark and it is the reason bearing it brings a judgment of eternal death:

DEUTERONOMY 29:9, 12 "Therefore **keep the words of this covenant**, and do them, that you may prosper in all that you do. ... 12 "**that you may enter into covenant with the LORD your God, and into His oath**, which the LORD your God makes with you today,

DEUTERONOMY 6:4-9 "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD *is* one! 5 "**You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.** 6 "And **these words [of the covenant]** which I command you today shall be in your heart. 7 "You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. 8 "**You shall bind them [the words] as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes.** 9 "You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

The Hebrew word for *frontlet* means a *fillet for the forehead*. Binding the words of the covenant on the hand and forehead was a visible "**sign**" of a sworn oath in a covenant with God (all covenants require swearing an oath<sup>1</sup>). The sign is in the forehead and hand, likely portraying the thoughts and actions required for covenant obedience. So, the Mark of the Beast is a counterfeit covenant sign. It, too, is a visible **sign** of those who are in COVENANT with the Beast; that is why their judgment is death in the Lake of Fire.

In addition to the Mark, there is the *name* or *number* of the Beast:

REVELATION 13:17-18 and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the **mark** or the **name** of the beast, or the **number** of his name. 18 Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding **calculate the number** of the beast, for it is the **number of a man**: His number *is* 666.

Valid ID of those who worship the Beast and are authorized to conduct business within that system also includes the Name of the Beast and the Number of his

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<sup>1</sup> Refer to the booklet [Swearing of Oaths](#).

name. One example of this is when John wrote the book of Revelation. He used 666 to avoid directly naming Nero Caesar as the Beast of his time. This was based upon gematria (assignment of numbers to letters) for the Jewish spelling of Nero Caesar. Here is how it works out:

Nero Caesar (Neron Kaisar) in Hebrew = **קסר נרון**:

N	R	U	N	C	S	R	
נ	ך	ו	נ	ק	ס	ך	
Nun	Resh	Vav	Nun	Qof	Samech	Resh	
50	200	6	50	100	60	200	= <u>666</u>

NOTE: At least one Greek manuscript uses 616 as the number of the Beast, which is the result of transliterating the Latin name Nero Caesar into Hebrew where it loses the final Nun (Hebrew is right to left).

The important point is that the number must be calculated. This contradicts searching for three 6's within a name or logo. Scripture plainly says that it is a number based upon calculation rather than barely recognizable squiggles added to a design. However, Scripture tells us what the Mark is:

REVELATION 14:11 “And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives **the mark of his name.**”

The Mark is the NAME of the Beast. And not only the name of the Beast but also his number. Notice the translation from the TS2009:

[NET2.1] REVELATION 13:17 Thus no one was allowed to buy or sell things unless he bore **the mark of the beast—that is, his name or his number.**

Other translations have similar phrasing indicating the Mark consists of either the Name or Number of the Beast. This puts a greater emphasis on the Mark being an external identifier rather than some technological implant.

So, why does Scripture variously mention worshipping the Beast and the Image of the Beast? This is not worship of two different beings; they are one and the same—the Beast. The Image is simply an idol. The False Prophet (the Second Beast that ascends out of the Earth) makes the inhabitants of the earth worship the First Beast (that ascends out of the Sea) through signs and wonders. He also tells the inhabitants of the earth to *make* an image of the First Beast to which he gives the ability to speak.<sup>2</sup> Even though people worship the Image of the Beast, it is likely not a living being since there is no record of it being cast into the Lake of Fire. The Image is simply an idol that points to the Beast.

History has similar examples. The evil King Nebuchadnezzar had a golden image made in his likeness. After he erected it, he demanded everyone worship it upon

<sup>2</sup> Rev. 14:1, 11-15.

pain of death<sup>3</sup>. God subsequently punished him by making him like a beast of the field for seven years<sup>4</sup>. Then there was Nero. During his reign in Rome from 54 AD to 68 AD, the wicked Nero Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus had busts of himself made. They were everywhere as public reminders that he was a self-proclaimed god who required all his subjects to worship him. Those who refused were sometimes killed.

Those with the Mark are sworn servants of both Satan and the Beast who are fully aware of the identities of whom they worship:

REVELATION 13:4-6 So **they worshiped the dragon** who gave authority to the beast; and **they worshiped the beast**, saying, “Who *is* like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?” 5 And he [*the Beast*] was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months. 6 Then **he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God**, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven.

Not only do they worship the Beast but they also worship the dragon, an epithet of Satan. The Beast makes no attempt to hide his identity. He is characterized as a “horn that had eyes and a **mouth that spoke pompous words**.”<sup>5</sup> He not only publicly blasphemes God but also publicly proclaims himself to be God as he sits on the mercy seat in the temple<sup>6</sup>. At this point, Satan is no longer operating in secret.

So, victory over the Beast will require choosing physical death over worship of the Beast. This is the time of the Great Tribulation when many saints will die:

REVELATION 7:9-10, 13-14 After these things I [*John*] looked, and behold, **a great multitude** which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, 10 and crying out with a loud voice, saying, “Salvation *belongs* to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!” ... 13 Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, “Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?” 14 And I said to him, “Sir, you know.” So he said to me, “**These are the ones who come out of the Great Tribulation**, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Through physical death during the Great Tribulation, many will receive eternal life<sup>7</sup>:

REVELATION 6:9-11 When He [*the Lamb*] opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. 10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, “How long, O Lord,

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<sup>3</sup> Dan. 3:1-6.

<sup>4</sup> Dan. 4:1-27.

<sup>5</sup> Dan. 7:20.

<sup>6</sup> 2 Thess. 2:4.

<sup>7</sup> Also Rev. 19:2.

holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?” 11 Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, **until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed.**

Physical death is how people will have victory over the Beast—they overcome or prevail against him by refusing to worship him:

REVELATION 15:2 And I [John] saw *something* like a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who have the **victory [subdue, i.e. overcome, prevail] over the beast, over his image and over his mark and over the number of his name,** standing on the sea of glass, having harps of God.

*Victory* in the Greek means to subdue, conquer, overcome, and prevail against. It is not a simple “No, thank you” rejection from which they can walk away. There is no neutral position when it comes to worshipping the Beast. Instead, they must CONQUER the Beast by actively REFUSING any allegiance, participation, portion, or share with him under threat of torture and death. But the people of God have had to make this choice for thousands of years to gain the victory of eternal life:

[NET 2.1] REVELATION 20:4 Then I [John] saw thrones and seated on them were those who had been given authority to judge. I also saw **the souls of those who had been beheaded** because of the testimony about Jesus and because of the word of God. **These had not worshiped the beast or his image and had refused to receive his mark on their forehead or hand.** They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

No one is simultaneously in covenant with both God and Satan so a person can only have the sign or mark of one covenant. All those of the *ekklesia* have the sign of the covenant with God, the Holy Spirit, and not just on their forehead and hand; it is within them. That is why blasphemy against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven<sup>8</sup>—it is a sign of those in covenant with God. And that is also why the Mark cannot force someone to worship the Beast. They must choose to be in covenant with the Beast just as people choose to be in covenant with God. For anyone with the Holy Spirit to receive the Mark of the Beast, they must first blaspheme the Holy Spirit and break their covenant with God!

This does raise the question of whether or not there is a spirit of Satan that he puts within people. Scripture certainly shows that he is a powerful influence:

EPHESIANS 2:2 in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, **the spirit that now works** in the sons of disobedience,

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<sup>8</sup> Matt. 12:31.

The word *works* is not from *ergo* in Greek. This is *energeo*, which is derived from *ergo* and means *energy*; i.e., to be actively working. The NET 2.1 says, “according to the ruler of the domain of the air, the ruler of the spirit that is now energizing the sons of disobedience.” In general, understanding the spirit world is difficult. The Bible mentions several spirits such as a “spirit of truth,” “spirit of error,” “spirit of the antichrist,” and “deceiving spirits.”<sup>9</sup> However, given the limitations of Satan when it comes to creating life<sup>10</sup> it is more likely that he mainly affects others through deception and influence in a manner consistent with people:

**ACTS 14:2 But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brethren.**

There are many things that are unknown or uncertain, but we absolutely know the one thing that matters more than anything else:

**1 JOHN 4:4 You are of God, little children, and have overcome them [spirits of wickedness], because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.**

May God’s grace and peace be upon you!

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<sup>9</sup> 1 John 4:1, 3, 6; 1 Tim. 4:1.

<sup>10</sup> See the Sabbath Thought on 2026-01-24 [Will Satan Die?](#)