

## The Mark of the Beast

The mark of the Beast is not mentioned until half-way through the book: Rev 13.15-17; 14.9-11; 16.2; 19.20; and 20.4. However, the mark of Christ is previously introduced in Rev 7.3; 9.4, and 14.1.

“The seal of God on their foreheads,” (Rev 9.4), seems to be a throwback to Eze 9.4-10. Ezekiel, already in exile in Babylonia. He says, “the Spirit lifted me up between earth and heaven and brought me in the visions of God to Jerusalem,” (Eze 8.3). One “like the appearance of a man - from His waist and downward there was the appearance of fire, and from His waist and upward like the appearance of a glow, like gleaming electrum [a gold-silver alloy]” (Eze 8.2) took Ezekiel into the temple (Eze 8.15), with which Ezekiel, a priest, was already familiar.

There, six “executioners of the city” and one scribe (Eze 9.1-2) were present.

Eze 9.4-10: “The Lord told him [the scribe], ‘Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and mark the foreheads of the people who groan and sigh over all the abominations which are being committed in its midst.’ But to the others He said in my ears, “Go through the city after him and strike. Do not let your eye have pity. Do not spare. Destroy old men, young men, virgins, little children, and women, **but touch no person on whom is the mark.** Start from My sanctuary.’ So they started with the elders in front of the house. He also told them, ‘Defile the house. Fill the courtyards with the dead. Go out!’ So they went out and struck and killed those in the city. And as they were striking and I was left, I fell on my face and cried out, ‘**Oh, Lord YHWH! Will You destroy the entire remnant of Israel by pouring Your wrath on Jerusalem?**’ Then He told me, ‘**The guilt of the house of Israel and Judah is very, very great. The land is filled with blood. The city is full of perversion. They say, ‘The Lord has abandoned the land, and the Lord does not see!’ But as for Me, My eye will not pity nor will I spare. I will bring their conduct upon their heads.**’”

The word translated “mark” in Eze 9 is literally *tau*, the final letter of the Hebrew alphabet. The scribe was to put *tau* on their foreheads. Today, *tau* is written thus, ט; however, when Ezekiel lived, tau was written like this, +.

The Mark of the Beast is called a (*charagma*). *Charagma* can also be translated *etching*. In the Roman empire, a charagma could also be a signum, seal, brand, or tattoo. 1) A signum was a lead locket/pendant/badge that bore the name and emblem of the emperor, worn by all who had sworn a sacramentum, or oath of obedient servanthood. These ranks included but were not limited to all the military, and other public servants. When swearing the oath, they gave an obligatory sacrifice to Caesar - sometimes a libation, often just a pinch of frankincense. 2) Also, every sales receipt in the empire had to bear a *charagma*, a seal that bore the date and the name of the emperor. Moreover, the coins used to transact the sale were stamped with the image and inscription of the emperor; many of these coins from 69-96 AD were stamped with images of all three Flavians, the “three kings in one,” Vespasian/Titus/Domitian. 3) Also, slaves frequently (and religious devotees sometimes) bore *brands*, whether *tattoos*, or scars, on their faces

(foreheads, neck) and/or hands/wrists. This practice prevailed among Sicilians, Arab sheikhs, Syrians, Egyptians, and some Romans.

“Give them a mark **upon** their right hands or **upon** their foreheads,” Rev 16.13. It does not seem that a subcutaneous chip would fit. This is a visible mark of intentional loyalty to the beast. Rev 14.9 says those marked are worshiping the Beast.