In the Bible, the Book of Revelation cryptically asserts the number 666 to be “the number of a man” who is associated with the “beast.” The reader is then challenged to decipher the symbolism of this number—a challenge that has inspired mystics and would-be prophets ever since.

Today, nearly two thousand years after the Book of Revelation was written, the Mark of the Beast remains an enigma to most. The long list of presumptions and theories surrounding the Mark, while solidly grounded in the popular culture and thinking of our day, fail to provide any specific or biblically sound explanation for this puzzle.

Perhaps the Mark of the Beast, like some of the other prophetic riddles, was intended to remain shrouded in mystery until the appointed time.

An Invaluable Insight

In previous chapters, it has been proposed that Islam is the key to understanding many of the prophecies concerning the end of the age. Might this also be the case regarding the Mark of the Beast? A recent discovery has led many to believe so.

In what is considered by some to be the ultimate in irony, it appears as though a man who was once a devout Muslim may have solved one of the great Bible mysteries of all time.

In this chapter, we are going to examine what is believed by many to be the first truly plausible explanation for the infamous Mark of the Beast. The source of this discovery is an ex-Muslim turned Christian who noticed something very peculiar while studying
a specific passage in the Book of Revelation. Indeed, in his 2005 book entitled, *Why I left Jihad*, Walid Shoebat brings to light a simple, yet profound, observation that will forever change the way many people look at this ancient Bible mystery.

After centuries of dead-end theories and fruitless attempts at decoding the number 666, it seems that one of the missing ingredients needed to solve this age-old riddle was an individual well versed in both the Bible and the religion of Islam, and who was also looking in the right place at the right time.

Without a doubt, Walid’s explanation for the Mark of the Beast approaches the topic from a completely new perspective—one previously unexplored by those who have sought to identify the true origins of the Antichrist.

**But First, Some Background**

Before we delve into the details of this discovery, we are first going to address some of the commonly held beliefs and perceptions surrounding the Mark and, also, explore some of the dilemmas faced by those who have previously grappled with this mystery. This will ultimately serve to enhance our appreciation of what can only now be recognized as the decidedly clear-cut meaning that is has held all along.

We begin our brief background study by asking the most fundamental question of all.

**What Is the Mark?**

The understanding held by most with respect to the Mark of the Beast, or “666,” is that this “mark,” or “number,” is an identifying sign of the Antichrist and his followers. Many also believe that the Mark will somehow be tattooed on, or physically implanted into, the Antichrist’s minions. Yet, beyond these basic notions, few have given the matter much thought.

For those who seek the answers, however, the Bible does provide some crucial information about this mark: First and foremost,
according to Scripture, the Mark is essentially used as a means to distinguish the followers of the Beast from the followers of God. By accepting the Mark of the Beast, one displays his dedication to the Antichrist and, at the same time, his opposition to the God of the Bible.

The Scriptures also tell us that those who take the Mark will be subject to some unique benefits, as well as some extreme punishments. For instance, the Book of Revelation speaks of a time when the only ones allowed to buy or sell will be those who have taken the Mark of the Beast: “And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark…” (Revelation 13:17). Conversely, we learn that these same people will be subject to God’s divine punishment for taking the Mark: “The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God…” (Revelation 14:10).

Is the Mark a Product of Technology?

With the advent of modern technology, some students of prophecy have assumed that the Mark may somehow be related to a type of invisible bar code system or, perhaps, a microchip implant with the number 666 encoded into it. Although, these scenarios do not seem very realistic, or practical, when one considers the fact that much of the world’s population—particularly many of the remote areas in the Middle East—have yet to see a credit card, or a bar code scanner, for that matter.

Still other problems crop up that seem to render the technology based scenarios implausible. To begin with, there is the obvious difficulty associated with implanting untold numbers of people with a microchip or marking them with some type of bar code.

Further, if a microchip tracking system became a reality, it is conceivable that one could approach a person who is sleeping—or in an otherwise vulnerable position—and literally force the mark upon them, thus labeling them as a follower of the Beast without the individual ever having a choice in the matter. The Bible makes it clear that those who take the Mark will be cast into Hell. Consid-
erating this, it does not stand to reason that God would allow this fate to befall those who were forced to take the Mark and therefore robbed of the opportunity to exercise their free will and refuse it.

“Let him that hath understanding…”

As we are beginning to see, the traditional explanations for the Mark of the Beast often lead to unsatisfactory conclusions. Adding to these difficulties, we are also faced with the all-important question of how to decode the number 666. This, of course, lies at the very heart of the issue, as this number apparently holds a critical clue with respect to the identity of the Antichrist. This is made evident in the Bible verse that initially introduces this cryptic number:

Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.

—Revelation 13:18

Here, we find the “number of the beast,” as it is referred to in the Scriptures (Six hundred threescore and six). Yet, how is one to make sense of this number? We conclude from the verse that this number is, again, associated with “a man,” but beyond that we are given no further clues.

The Trouble With 666

In our search for the relationship between this number and the Antichrist, we begin with some very old Bible scrolls that appear to record the number 616 instead of 666. There is also a record of at least one copy having the number 665. Obviously, these inconsistencies present some problems for those hoping to decode the meaning of these digits. Even if one were to eliminate the two anomalies (616 and 665) and focus on the widely accepted 666, there are multiple reasons why attempting to decode a number presents a problem.
For example, a popular technique that many students and scholars have employed in their efforts to decipher the meaning of 666 is the Gematria. The Gematria is a mystical form of numerology that assigns a numerical value to each letter of any given name. The sum totals of the letters are then added up, resulting in the number of that individual’s name.

While intriguing, there are a variety of problems associated with this approach. The most obvious being that this practice has been labeled as occultism by many, which is strictly forbidden in the Bible. Also, one could imagine that almost any name might be manipulated in some fashion to produce the number 666. For instance, this method has been used to identify numerous public figures as the Antichrist, including our own Ronald Reagan, as well as Mikhail Gorbachev, and even Prince Charles!

An additional problem with the Gematria arises in determining which language should be used when assigning the numerical values. Despite the fact that the Gematria is rooted in the Hebrew alphabet, many scholars believe, for various reasons, that Greek, Latin, or even English, should be applied to solving this particular riddle. The problems only compound from there.

Faced with the increasingly daunting task of decoding this number, we pause to consider a key question: Would God tell us in this verse to “count the number of the beast” if it were an unsolvable puzzle with many possible answers? The answer is, of course, no. This verse was included in the Bible so that it could be understood by the reader. Though, again, perhaps it would not be fully understood until the appointed time.

**It’s Greek to Me**

Having addressed the numerous difficulties associated with this ancient riddle, we return to the original source of a recent and eye-opening discovery: author and speaker, Walid Shoebat.

Evidently, while studying the aforementioned Bible passage, which reveals the “number of the beast” in its original language
(Greek), Walid immediately noticed a peculiarity that led him to question whether the number 666 was actually intended to be a number at all. Was it possible that this “number” was originally something altogether different?

What Walid had noticed, through his Arab—and formerly Muslim—eyes, was that the Greek letters used to denote the number 666 (Chi Xi Stigma), looked very much like Arabic words and Islamic symbols. In fact, they looked eerily similar to the Arabic phrase “In the name of Allah,” followed by the symbol of two crossed swords!¹

Owing to his insider’s perspective, Walid recognized that the crossed swords are universally used to signify Islam. They can be found on virtually every letterhead within the Islamic world, as well as the emblems or logos of most Islamic groups. He was also, of course, well aware that “In the name of Allah, most gracious, most merciful,” is the most commonly used phrase throughout all of Islam.²

One can only imagine the effect that this jaw dropping revelation must have had on Walid, as he noticed the correlations between the Greek and Arabic symbols. Incredibly, the only difference between the Islamic phrase and the Greek text was that of orientation: In the Greek text, the characters appeared to be positioned sideways, or vertically, rather than horizontally. The images below help to illustrate.³

The image on the far left is from the Codex Vaticanus (Greek) Bible, A.D. 350, and illustrates exactly what the characters Chi Xi Stigma, or “666,” look like in the original New Testament text. The center image is Arabic and is commonly seen throughout the Islamic world. It spells out “In the name of Allah,” fol-
lowed by two crossed swords (note that Arabic reads from right to left). The image on the far right is, again, taken from the Codex Vaticanus but with the symbols that resemble “in the name of Allah” flipped, as the Arabic would read. Note the striking similarities between the center and right side images.

In this image, we have the Greek “Xi,” exactly as it appears in the Codex Vaticanus, next to a flipped “Allah.”

The similarities between the flipped Codex Vaticanus and the Arabic symbols are, quite simply, astonishing...For the sake of further comparison, let us take a look at some other examples.

Above, we have four different variations of the phrase “in the name of Allah, most gracious, most merciful,” as it appears in Arabic. In spite of the diversity in style and character placement, the phrase that Walid found in the Greek text, “In the Name of Allah,” or “Bism Allah” in Arabic, can be clearly picked out (toward the right side) in each version.
Here, we have two additional examples of Greek Bible texts. The one on the right is a Hinds & Noble interlinear version that provides the English translation directly beneath the Greek text ([jis] 666). The “sideways” Allah and the crossed swords are clearly identifiable in each version.

Again, in spite of the slight style variations, there is no mistaking the uncanny likeness between the Greek and Arabic characters and symbols. Common sense would seem to dictate that the odds of this happening by sheer coincidence are beyond calculation.

Could it be that the true meaning of the Mark of the Beast has been hidden in plain sight all along?

“How has this remained undiscovered?”

Presuming that the Mark of the Beast is, in fact, “in the name of Allah,” certain questions come immediately to mind; the most obvious being, how could this go undetected for nearly two thousand years? Unfortunately, we can only speculate as to the combination of events that may have led to the initial concealment of the Mark, but there is a scenario that seems plausible.

A Likely Chain of Events

As chronicled in the Book of Revelation, the Apostle John was given a vision of the future in which he was told by an angel to write down what he saw. In this vision, rather than being shown the Greek letters that represent the number 666, John may have actually been shown Arabic words and symbols that he could not understand but, nevertheless, faithfully recorded to the best of his ability.⁴
Allowing for this possibility, it seems likely that the scribes who were later commissioned to copy the original text would have been unable to recognize the foreign (Arabic) words and symbols as recorded by John. Faced with these odd-looking characters, they might have done exactly what many people in their position would do, which is to assume a mistake or, perhaps, some poor penmanship on John’s part. Thus, in an effort to make sense of these markings, they may have chosen to slightly modify them into the Greek characters that they most closely resembled.5

While all of this is purely conjecture, it most definitely merits careful consideration and also begs a further question: Is it possible that God, in His all-knowing wisdom, allowed this to happen, realizing that the meaning behind these symbols would remain undetected until the end times? When one considers the manner in which prophecy has been revealed in the past, this possibility makes sense on many levels.

“Why is this being revealed now?”

It has been said that when God wants to bring understanding to the forefront, He enables ordinary men and women to discover what has been hidden. Throughout the ages, we find this process at work. As the time of fulfillment nears, elements of the Bible prophecies are understood. For instance, when it came time to discern the timing of Christ’s birth, the wise men from the East determined from the Scriptures that the moment had come (Matthew 2:2).

Could it be that the current generation has been called to understand the prophecies concerning the Beast and its Mark, as this same generation will witness their fulfillment? While it is not inconceivable that someone might have discovered the correlations between these symbols and characters at some point earlier in history, it would most likely have escaped detection without the necessary insight of looking to Islam and Allah as being the force behind the final Antichrist Kingdom.
Again, perhaps as intended, it has not been until recent years that certain persons of discernment have cast their eyes toward Islam and its possible role in the end times.

**More Translational Issues?**

In light of our new found perspective on the Mark of the Beast, we now reconsider the Bible verse that initially introduced the Mark (Revelation 13:18).

In order to put Walid’s discovery to the test, we will replace “Six hundred threescore and six” with “in the name of Allah”—noting what effect this substitution has on our overall understanding of the verse:

Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number “is in the name of Allah.”

—Revelation 13:18 (modified)

Admittedly, after inserting “in the name of Allah,” the words “count” and “number” seem to be slightly out of tune with the rest of the verse. Clearly, these words were intended to reference a number and not a name. Even so, is this awkward wording enough to invalidate the theory?

Our experience up until now tells us that minor translational issues can, indeed, play a part in our overall understanding of a verse. Therefore, focusing on the two words in question, we once again turn to the original Greek text of the Bible:

The first word, “number,” is translated from the Greek word, arithmos. Arithmos may also be accurately translated as multitude (peoples and nations). The second word, “count,” which originates from the Greek, psephizo, is also often translated as reckon, or decide.6

Obviously, when this verse was originally translated it was done so with the understanding that the original author, John, had written a number (Chi Xi Stigma) rather than a name (Arabic char-
acters). It would then stand to reason that the translators, when choosing an equivalent for the Greek word, *arithmos*, would have chosen “*number,*” in lieu of *multitude*. From their perspective, the context of the verse would seem to validate this choice.

Likewise, the same reasoning would have been applied when translating the Greek word, *psephizo*. The translators would have logically chosen “*count,*” instead of its alternate translation, *decide*, or *reckon*, as it would seem to fit more with the reference to a *number* (Chi Xi Stigma).

In order to illustrate to what extent these translational issues can color the subtleties of a passage, we will insert the alternate translations of the original Greek words, *arithmos* and *psephizo*, into Revelation 13:18, and then compare the modified verse to the original.

Below, we have two versions of verse 18. The first appears exactly as it is found in the King James Version of the Bible:

> Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.  
> —Revelation 13:18

Here, in the second version, we have replaced the words in question with their alternate translations:

> Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding decide the multitude of the beast: for it is the multitude of a man; and his multitude is “in the name of Allah.”  
> —Revelation 13:18 (alternate translation)

By simply replacing the key words with their equally accurate and, perhaps, more appropriate translations, the verse is transformed. The references to “*the multitude of the beast*” and “*the multitude of a man*” clearly refer to the legions of Muslims who worship the “beast” (Islam), as well as the religion that was founded
not by God but by a “man” (Muhammed). The last line of the verse indicates that “his multitude is in the name of Allah,” further describing the vast numbers of Muslims that worship Allah as god.

Remarkably, these seemingly inconsequential judgment calls on the part of translators appear to be the very factor that has enabled the Mark of the Beast to remain an enigma for nearly two thousand years.

At this point, although we have dispelled much of the mystery surrounding the Mark by unraveling its true meaning, there is still a key piece of this puzzle that remains unsolved—which prompts an all-important question.

How Might the Mark Be Manifested?

The Bible tells us that the Antichrist will require “all” people to “receive” the Mark. Assuming the Mark to be “in the name of Allah,” what might this indicate? In our search for an answer to this question, Revelation 13:16 is a good place to begin:

And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:

—Revelation 13:16

This verse tells us that all must receive the Mark “in their right Hand” or “in their forehead.” Does this mean that “in the name of Allah” will be literally stamped onto the forehead or right hand like a tattoo or, perhaps, encoded onto a microchip and implanted into the followers of the Beast? Again, these options remain somewhat unrealistic for the reasons that we noted earlier. In view of this, as we search for a plausible answer, we are wise to return to the most untainted source, which is the original Greek text of the Bible.

By doing some research, we find that the Greek word, chara-
**The Mark of the Beast**

*gm\(a\)*, which has been translated to “*mark*” in this verse, actually refers to a badge of servitude. Strong’s Hebrew Lexicon defines *charagma* as the “badge” of the followers of the Antichrist. Thus, the word *charagma* seems to suggest something that is worn rather than permanently tattooed, or implanted like a microchip.

Further, it is worth noting that the phrase “right hand” comes from the Greek, *dexios*, which may also be translated as “*the right side*” in general. This implies that the Mark, or badge, might also be displayed on the right arm and is, therefore, not necessarily limited to the right hand.\(^8\)

 Nonetheless, assuming the Mark to be some sort of badge that displays the name of Allah, what might we expect this to look like?

**The Badge of Servitude**

Yet once more, we note the widespread use of the Shahada within the Muslim world. As we know, the Shahada is essentially a declaration of allegiance, or servitude, to Allah and is commonly recited as follows: “There is no god but Allah, and Muhammed is his prophet.” The inscription of this declaration is already worn (as a badge) by millions on the forehead or right arm. It can be seen on Muslim demonstrators and jihadists everywhere.

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8. Furthermore, it is worth noting that the phrase “right hand” comes from the Greek, *dexios*, which may also be translated as “*the right side*” in general. This implies that the Mark, or badge, might also be displayed on the right arm and is, therefore, not necessarily limited to the right hand.8 Nonetheless, assuming the Mark to be some sort of badge that displays the name of Allah, what might we expect this to look like?

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Note the various forms of the Islamic creed, or “Shahada,” imprinted on the headbands (or foreheads) of these jihadists. In most of the images the name of Allah is easily identifiable.

Needless to say, the Bible’s description of the Beast’s followers receiving a “mark” no longer seems to be an odd concept. In fact, within the context of Islam, the idea now makes perfect sense and has taken on an altogether contemporary feel.

It is certain that as the Antichrist’s Empire comes to power, and people are compelled to declare their loyalty to Allah, the Mark, or declaration of allegiance, will be worn by multitudes of faithful Muslims, as well as some who are, perhaps, merely attempting to avoid persecution—which brings up another interesting question.

**Must One Display the Name of Allah to Be Considered a Follower of the Beast?**

Although we have focused specifically on the actual physical **wearing** of the Mark, it is also quite likely that the Mark carries just as much meaning in the **spiritual** sense—meaning that a simple declaration of belief in Allah would **spiritually mark** one as a follower of the Beast. Therefore, in God’s eyes, it would not necessarily be required for one to outwardly **wear** the Mark in order to be counted among the followers of Allah.

We find scriptural support for this concept in the Book of Revelation, which speaks of God’s people being “sealed” (Revelation 7:4) with the “Father’s name written on their foreheads” (Revelation 14:1). This denotes a **spiritual seal** that identifies one as belonging to God.
It is interesting to note that the Mark of the Beast and the Seal of God are both names that are placed on the foreheads of the people who receive them. Evidently, the Beast is attempting to duplicate God’s program by similarly inscribing his mark, or name, on the foreheads of his followers. This tendency to counterfeit the work of God is a recurring theme and is also a distinctive satanic trait which is grounded in the fact that Satan wishes to be like God and actually desires to accept worship in place of Him.

Conclusion

Our study of the Mark of the Beast has demonstrated that these particular verses—in order to be fully understood—had to be viewed from the proper perspective and, perhaps, from a particular juncture in time.

Once again, the religion of Islam, placed in the role of antichrist, has opened a door to understanding the ancient prophecies—exposing what was previously shrouded in mystery.

As we conclude this chapter, in which we have quite possibly uncovered a truth that has escaped the scrutiny of countless Bible scholars throughout the centuries, we learn the fate of those souls who have been deceived by Satan and have taken the Mark of the Beast:

And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.

—Revelation 14:9-11