REVELATION 13

Two Beasts: The Great Counterfeit

> *"All who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain."*
> REVELATION 13:8

A SMITH FOR CHRIST STUDY · WITH TSARFATI · MACARTHUR · GUZIK

Where John has brought us

1. Revelation 12 pulled back the curtain on the war behind history: a woman, a Child caught up to God, and a great red dragon thrown down to earth, “having great wrath, knowing that he has only a short”…

2. This is the chapter people argue about most — 666, the mark, the identity of the beast.

The Beast from the Sea

Daniel's beasts fused into one, with a wound that heals

REVELATION 13:3

I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast;

AMIR TSARFATI

Tsarfati reaches back to Daniel 7.

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik notes that to Israel the sea meant chaos and evil resisting God, and from that place the beast rises. Scripture already knows him — Daniel's little horn, the prince who is to come, the man of lawlessness.

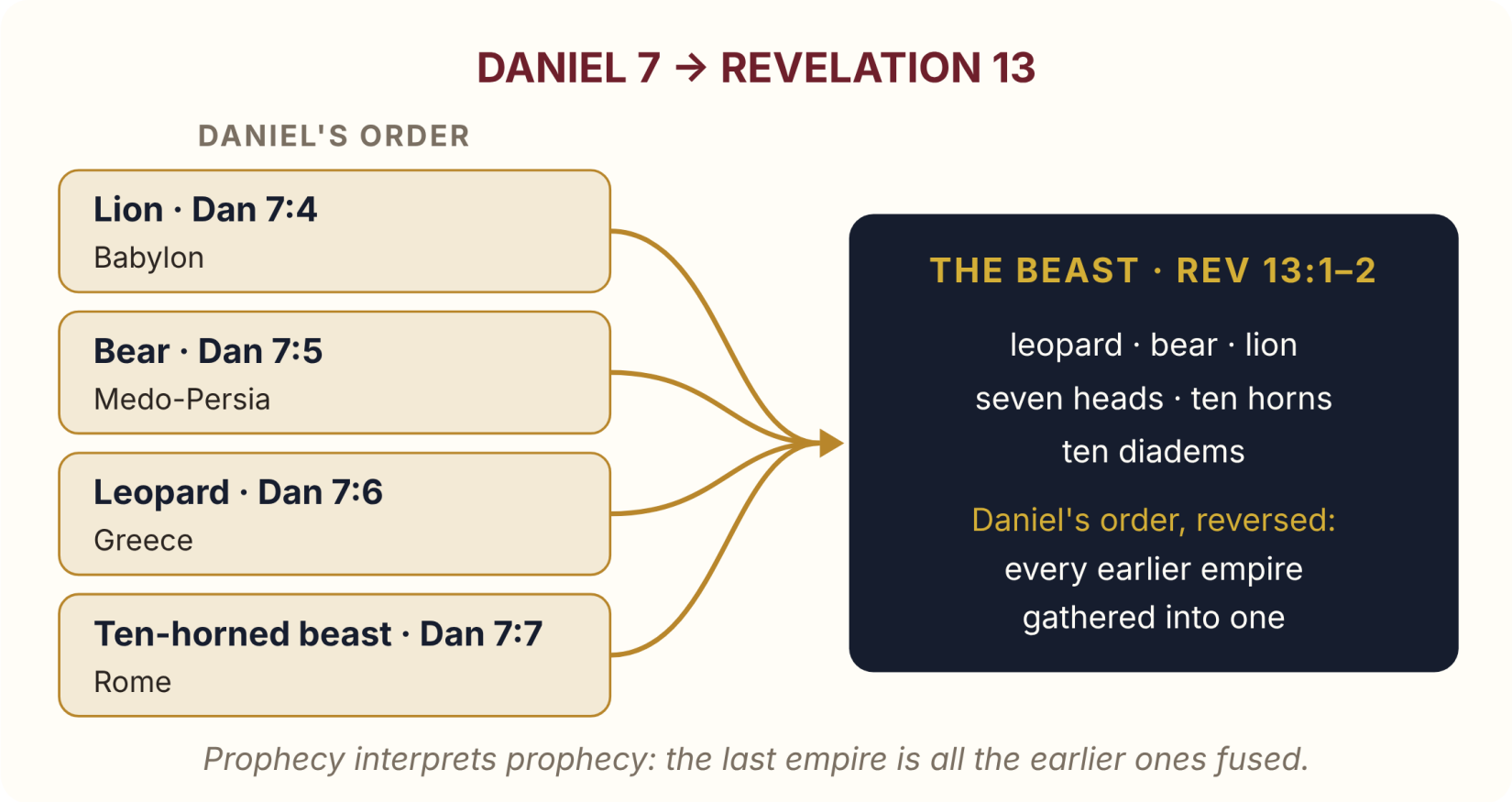
JOHN MACARTHUR

MacArthur marks both the source and the limit of the beast's power. The dragon gives him his power, his throne and his great authority — Satan offers this man the very kingdoms Jesus refused in the wilderness.

θηρίον
THĒRION · "BEAST"

Thērion is a wild, dangerous animal — a predator, not a pet. John chooses the word on purpose.

Daniel's Beasts Fused into One



Daniel saw four beasts one after another; John sees them gathered into a single final empire (13:1–2; Dan 7:3–7).

His Mouth, His War, His Leash

Everything the beast has "was given" — for forty-two months

REVELATION 13:8

All who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain.

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik is careful with the word overcome in verse 7. The beast makes war with the saints and overcomes them, but this does not mean, he says, 'that the beast can overcome the faith of the saints.'

AMIR TSARFATI

Tsarfati reads verse 6 closely: the beast blasphemes God's name and His tabernacle, "that is, those who dwell in heaven." For Tsarfati that is the raptured church, already safely beyond the beast's reach.

ἐξουσία

EXOUSIA · "AUTHORITY"

Exousia is delegated right and power to act — authority someone else hands you. It runs through this chapter like a thread.

Ears to Hear: The Saints' Weapon

Not the sword, but perseverance and faith

REVELATION 13:10

If anyone is destined for captivity, to captivity he goes; if anyone kills with the sword, with the sword he must be killed. Here is the perseverance and the faith of the saints.

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik hears in verse 9 the same call that closed each of the seven letters to the churches (2:7).

WHAT IT MEANS

Verse 9 is a pause in the vision, and John speaks straight to the reader: “If anyone has an ear, let him hear.” Then comes a hard word. Some of God's people are headed for captivity; some will die by the sword.

ὑπομονή

HYPOMONĒ · “PERSEVERANCE”

Hypomonē is endurance — literally staying under the load. It is not the courage of a single charge but the strength to stand under weight day after day without setting it down or running.

The Beast from the Earth

Horns like a lamb, a voice like a dragon

REVELATION 13:11

Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb and he spoke as a dragon.

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik calls the dragon and the two beasts an unholy trinity: the dragon in the place of the Father, the first beast in the place of Christ, and the second beast imitating the Holy Spirit — pointing people to…

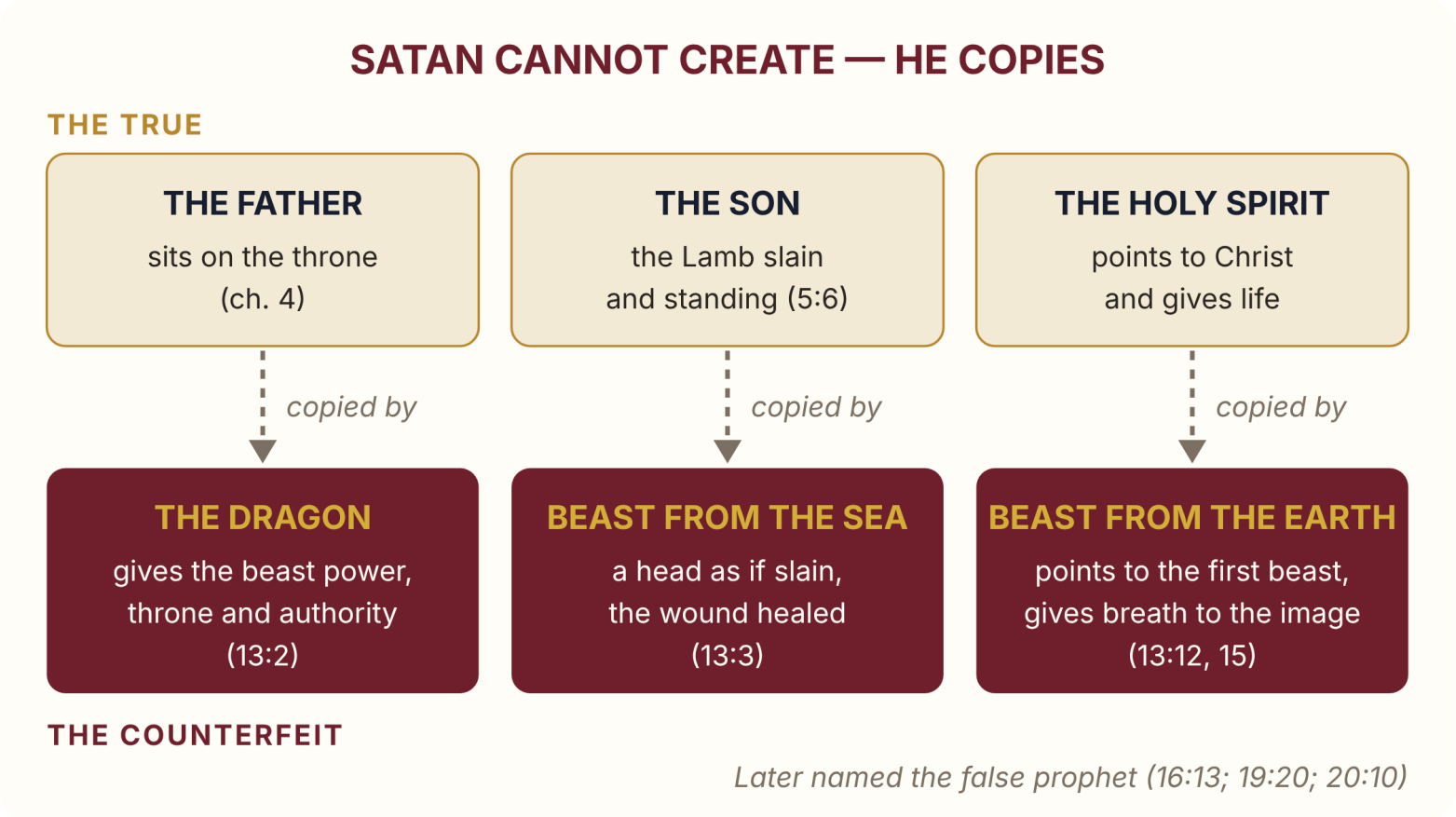
JOHN MACARTHUR

MacArthur identifies the image the false prophet erects as the abomination of desolation, and refusing to worship it becomes a capital crime — worship, at last, is the whole battlefield.

σημεῖον
SĒMEION · “SIGN”

A sēmeion is a miracle that points to something beyond itself. That is what makes the second beast's “great signs” (13:13) so dangerous: they are real enough to amaze, and they point away from God — to the first beast and his image.

The Counterfeit Trinity



Guzik: the dragon stands in the place of the Father, the sea beast in the place of Christ, and the earth beast imitates the Spirit.

The Mark and the Number

No mark, no bread — and a number that is only a man

REVELATION 13:16

And he causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free men and the slaves, to be given a mark on their right hand or on their forehead,

JOHN MACARTHUR

MacArthur calls the mark Satan's parody of God's seal on His own servants. Satan brands his followers with the beast's name; God writes His own name on His servants' foreheads.

AMIR TSARFATI

Tsarfati calls the mark loyalty made visible — worship enforced through the checkout line. No mark, no bread, and he sees the shadow of that cashless, centralized day already on the wall.

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik will not play the guessing game: 'the schemes for unlocking the number of the beast are as confusing as they are endless.'

χάραγμα
CHARAGMA · "MARK"

Charagma is an engraving, a stamp or a brand. Guzik notes the word and says a literal mark needed to buy or sell is certainly conceivable and practical.

Two Marks, Two Destinies



Everyone in that day wears somebody's mark — God's seal or the beast's brand — and the two part ways forever.

What to carry from this chapter

1

Satan can only copy.

Satan can't create, but he can deceive with imitation — even a staged death and resurrection.

2

Daniel arriving on schedule.

The leopard, bear and lion are Daniel 7's empires fused into one final, revived-Roman world system.

3

A borrowed throne.

The dragon offers the beast the very kingdoms Jesus refused in the wilderness — and none of it moves outside God's decree.

4

“Was given.”

The beast's mouth, months and war are all permitted — and only for forty-two months.

More to carry

5

Slain, and slain.

The same word, sphazō (G4969), describes the beast's head (13:3) and the Lamb (5:6; 13:8): the counterfeit apes the real.

6

Worship is the battlefield.

The image is the abomination of desolation, and refusing it becomes a capital crime.

7

No mark, no bread.

The mark is loyalty made visible — worship enforced through the checkout line.

8

Be an expert in the genuine.

Don't obsess over decoding 666; know Jesus Christ so well that no counterfeit can pass.

Talk it through

1. The beast's head looked “as if it had been slain” and the Lamb “has been slain.” Why does Satan copy the resurrection instead of inventing something new?

2. Circle every “was given” in verses 5–15. How does that change the way you look at the powers that frighten you?

3. The world followed the beast because no one could fight him. Where have you been drawn to strength more than to holiness?

4. Why does Satan tie worship to buying and selling? Where does your paycheck quietly pressure your loyalty?

5. What does it mean to be an expert in the genuine rather than a decoder of the counterfeit?

CLOSING

Revelation 13 assembles the darkest cast in the book, but John wrote it to steady the church, not to frighten her. Every power the beast has was given, and only for a set time, and every name in the Lamb's book is kept. You may never see the beast, but you will meet his method — so belong so completely to the Lamb that His seal, not the world's mark, is already on you.

Teaching the Word. Watching the Times. — Smith For Christ

O·I·A study, slides, reflection journal and film: see the Revelation study page.