

Judgment on Babylon



Collegiate Quarterly

Teacher's Guide

Materials

Reproducible Activity, Bibles, pens, paper

Surveying the Source

Rev. 13:1–8; 17:1–3, 12–15

Plotting the Course

The students will:

► Grasp the essence of Revelation's teachings about Satan's last-day deceptions.

► Understand the dangers that these deceptions pose to them and to their church.

► Reflect on how the teachings of God's Word, and particularly those of the book of Revelation, can prepare their minds and hearts to deal with the challenges of these troubled times.

Preparing to Lead

Reflect on this quote: "There is a need of much closer study of the Word of God; especially should Daniel and the Revelation have attention as never before in the history of our work... One thing will certainly be understood from the study of Revelation... that the connection between God and His people is close and decided" (Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, pp. 112–114).

In the preface to his commentary titled *Revelation of Jesus Christ*, Ranko Stefanovic writes that the ultimate objective of his commentary is "to apply Revelation's message to the contemporary life situation of the church as it endeavors to present the gospel message to the lost, suffering world." May that objective likewise guide your preparation and presentation of this week's lesson.

Getting Started

A. Ask your students to share some of the negative thinking they or others have had about the book of Revelation. For instance: (1) Studying the book of Revelation "can make you mad." (At least one senior churchman told his congregation to avoid the book for that reason.) (2) "Too hard to understand." (3) All the scary creatures in the book. (4) Can lead to controversies and quarrels among church members. Also, please ask class members to share how, if at all, this week's lesson has helped them to find answers to these and other concerns.

B. Ask class members to give the meaning of apocalypse. In particular, ask if they remember that apocalypse means secret or if they know people who believe so. Express the hope that class members will understand that the book is in fact about "the Revelation of Jesus Christ to John." In other words, Revelation is a book of wisdom and inspiration, not a nightmare to avoid or a secret to evade.

Delving Into the Word

A. Ask class members to pay close attention while you, or one of the students, reads Rev. 17:1, 2, 5 aloud. Do the same with Rev. 7:2, 3.

Ask: “What are some of the similarities between the two texts? (Possible answers could include, a seal on the forehead or angels.) What are some of the differences? (Possible answers could include Babylon, the prostitute, blasphemy, sitting on ‘many waters,’ i.e. exercising power over many nations.)”

B. Ask class members to pay attention while you, or one of your students, reads Rev. 4:1, 8–10. Then ask someone else to read Rev. 12:3, 7, 8; 13:4.

Ask: “Which of the two readings is about God? Which one is about Satan? Which of the two—God or Satan—has ever lived in Heaven? Which one lives in Heaven today? Which of the two is worshipped today?”

To end the discussion, *say:* “How can we, and the church, avoid worshipping Satan, knowingly or unknowingly?”

Discussing the Ideas

1. The counterfeit trinity motif consists of the dragon (Satan), the sea beast, and the land beast. Which of the three is represented in the following texts: Rev. 12:3; 13:1, 11.

2. Apart from the trinity, last-day counterfeit motifs relate to: the seal (the mark of the beast versus God’s seal); the message (three demonic messages versus the three angels’ message); and the city (Babylon versus the New Jerusalem). Which motifs do you find in these texts: Rev. 16:2, 13; 18:2.

3. In prophesy, including John’s proph-

esy, does woman refer to God’s faithful people? Or apostate Christians? Or both?

4. What is the danger of having the mark of the beast placed on your forehead or your hand (c.f. Rev. 14:9–11)?

5. What dangers do Satan’s end-time deceptions pose for your church and the Seventh-day Adventist movement generally?

6. How can you personally avoid the mark of the beast? Will you?

7. In what three ways can you benefit from the Book of Revelation (c.f. Rev. 1:1–3)?

Closing the Activity

Distribute the Reproducible Activity and read it. Divide class members into groups of two or, at most, three. Assign to each group one the eight topics on the handout. Give priority to the four items on the left, those under “God’s Divine

Truth.” If time permits, ask one or two groups to share what was learned. Then close with a brief prayer to God to save class members from Satan’s deceptions and to imbue their hearts with God’s divine truth.

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God's Divine Truth and Satan's Counterfeit \$13 Bills

Whether it's the Sabbath, the Trinity, or miracles of healing, everything God does, Satan tries to replicate. But the devil's copy is always as bogus as a \$13 bill. Here are a few examples.

God's Divine Truth	Satan's Counterfeit \$13 Bills
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 10px;">The Holy Trinity</div> <p>The Father (Rev. 1:8; 4:8, 9) The Son (Matt. 25:31; Rev. 2:27) The Holy Spirit (John 16:13)</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 10px;">Satan's Counterfeit Trinity</div> <p>The Dragon/Satan (Rev. 13:4) The Sea Beast (Rev. 13:1–10) The Earth Beast (Rev. 13:11–17)</p>
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 10px;">The Seal of the Living God</div> <p>Seal on God's servants (Rev. 7:1)</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 10px;">Satan's Counterfeit Seal</div> <p>Mark of the Beast (Rev. 13:16–18; 16:2)</p>
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 10px;">God's Divine Messages</div> <p>Three Angels' Messages (Rev. 14:6–12)</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 10px;">Satan's Counterfeit Messages</div> <p>Three demonic messages (Rev. 16:13, 14)</p>
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 10px;">The Holy City</div> <p>New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:10–12)</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 10px;">City of the Devil</div> <p>Babylon (Rev. 18:1–4)</p>