

A Message Worth Sharing



SABBATH—SEPTEMBER 12

READ FOR THIS WEEK'S LESSON: Revelation 14:6-8, 14-20.

MEMORY VERSE: “Then I saw another angel flying in the heavens [high in the sky]. He was carrying the Good News that lasts forever. He was preaching to every nation [country] and to every family group and to the people of every language and to all the people of [on] the earth. He said with a loud voice, ‘Honor God with love and fear [respect and obedience]. The time has come for Him to judge all men. Worship Him Who made heaven and earth and the sea and the places where water comes out of the earth’ ” (Revelation 14:6, 7, NLV).



Jesus died the death we should have died so that we can live with Him.

JESUS died for everyone who ever lived. So, the Good News is for everyone. The Good News is all about Jesus. It is about how Jesus wins the war against the devil and death. Jesus joins us to God again. He came to make us free from sin's punishment and power. Jesus makes us clean and holy. Jesus died for us and now lives for us. Jesus died the death we should have died so that we can live with Him. Soon He will cover us with glory and give us bodies that will not die. Jesus will come again to make us free from sin forever.

The Bible tells us about Jesus' two comings. He came the first time to save us. He will come back to take us home. The book of Revelation was written to help us get ready for the Second Coming. This week, we will look at why Revelation is important for people today. We will look at Jesus' invitation to His end-time church to help Him share this final message of mercy with the people on earth.

PETER'S SPECIAL MESSAGE FOR HIS TIME
(2 Peter 1:12)

All during Bible history, God sent special messages to His people. These prophecies, or special messages, helped God's people to get ready for what was coming. God always knows what will happen (Isaiah 46:9, 10). So, God helps His people get ready for the future by sending to them His prophets, or special messengers. The prophets warn God's people before God's punishment comes against them (Amos 3:7). In the days before the Flood, God sent Noah a message. Then Noah warned the people on the earth that the Flood was coming. In Egypt, God chose Joseph to help the people get ready for the food shortage seven years before it happened. The Jewish prophets warned the Israelite leaders that the armies of Babylon were coming to destroy Jerusalem. John the Baptist's message helped the Jews get ready for Jesus' first coming.

Read 2 Peter 1:12. What words does Peter write in this verse to talk about the message God gives him for the Christians in his day?

Read 2 Peter 1:16–21. As these verses show, what “present truth” message do Peter and Jesus' followers announce? Present truth is the truth that people need most for the time they live in.

The present-truth message for Peter's day was that Jesus came. Jesus' death on the cross showed God the Father's love. Sin leads to death. But Jesus made it possible for everyone to have everlasting life. It is our choice to accept this gift (Romans 3:23; Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8). The message about God's gift of everlasting life in Jesus will never be out of date. It is present truth for all people for all time.

The Bible's last book is Revelation. Revelation shows Jesus and His gift of everlasting life. This book was written to help people living in the end times to get ready for Jesus' Second Coming. Revelation shows us everything that is wrong with human ways of life and selfish religion. From the first page to the last page, Revelation shows Jesus and the work He does to save people. Jesus is the true witness. He shows us who His Father is. Jesus “is the head [top leader] over all the kings of the earth” (Revelation 1:5, NLV). Revelation is all about Jesus.



Revelation shows Jesus and His gift of everlasting life.

REVELATION'S END-TIME MESSAGE (Revelation 1:7)

Our Lord invites everyone who seeks for everlasting life to come to Him.

The first four books of the New Testament are known as the Gospels. The Gospels are mostly about Jesus' first coming. They tell the story about Jesus' being born, His life, His work for God on earth, His death on the cross, and His waking up from the dead. The Gospels talk about the Second Coming. But that is not their most important topic. The book of Revelation does what the Gospels do not do. Revelation's most important topic is the end of the war between God and Satan. Almost all of its most important prophecies, or special messages, end in the Second Coming.

Read Revelation 1:7; Revelation 11:15; Revelation 14:14–20; and Revelation 19:11–18. What happens in each of these verses? How do they all end?

From the first chapter to the last chapter in Revelation, almost every prophecy ends in Jesus' Second Coming. The " 'Lamb [a word picture for Jesus] who was killed' " (Revelation 5:12, ERV) will come again. He is the King " 'who rules [has control] over all' " (Revelation 19:15, NlrV). Jesus will beat all the enemies who hurt God's people and attacked them because of their faith (Revelation 17:14). Jesus will set free His people from this life of sin. He will bring His people home to live with Him in glory. The worldwide war between good and evil will end. God will make the earth new. The saved will live there with their Lord forever (Revelation 21:1–4).

In Revelation 22:7, NlrV, Jesus says, " 'Look! I am coming soon! Words of prophecy are written in this book. Blessed is the person who obeys them.' " (Read also Revelation 22:12, 17, and 20.) Jesus' final message to all humans is clear. He wants them to be ready for His Second Coming. So, He asks them to accept His love and mercy and to obey Bible truth. The book of Revelation ends with Jesus' invitation: " 'The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" Everyone who hears this should also say, "Come!" ' " (Revelation 22:17, ERV).

Our Lord invites everyone who seeks everlasting life to come to Him. Then He invites us to join Him in inviting other people to accept His message of love too. Jesus sends us to share His message with people. This message will help them get ready for Jesus' Second Coming. He is coming soon. Let us work together with Him!

REVELATION'S END-TIME MESSAGE (Revelation 14:14–20)

The center of Revelation is chapter 14. This chapter is very important to God's people in the last days. It shows God's end-time message to humans. This message is important to God's people and all humans on the earth.

Read Revelation 14:14–20. What word picture is used in these verses to show Jesus' Second Coming?

The word picture of collecting grain is used in the Bible to show Jesus' Second Coming (read Matthew 13:37–43; Mark 4:29). In Revelation 14, the crop of ripe grain shows us the people that God saves. These people obey God. The ripe grapes show us that God will destroy evil people. Revelation 14:6–12 has an important end-time message. This message will help men and women get ready to be part of the final "crop" that God saves from the earth.

Read Revelation 14:6, 7. What are these verses saying? How do these verses help us to understand who we are as Seventh-day Adventists?

The First Angel's Message gives our lives meaning. That is something that people in our time deeply want. The First Angel's Message shows that God will forgive anyone who accepts His gift of mercy. God's grace, or loving-favor, cleans us from the guilt of sin. God's grace helps us win the war against sin. The First Angel's Message gives us the reason for our worth: Jesus made us and saves us. The First Angel's Message also shows us that in the future God will judge and punish evildoers. This is wonderful news! It shows us that evil will not last forever.

"In a special way, God made Seventh-day Adventists to be the same as guards and lights on this earth. God gave Seventh-day Adventists the last warning for a dying planet. God gave Seventh-day Adventists wonderful Bible truth. God also gave Seventh-day Adventists work to do that is very important. Their job is to announce the First, Second, and Third Angels' Messages to the people on earth. No other work is as important. Seventh-day Adventists must not let anything else take their attention away from this work."—Ellen G. White, *Evangelism*, pages 119, 120. How can we make sure we give this work our full attention?



In Revelation 14, the crop of ripe grain shows us that God saves people who obey Him.

UNDERSTANDING GOD'S END-TIME MESSAGE MORE FULLY (Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14)

Revelation's end-time message shows Jesus and His saving grace, or loving-favor. This grace is for all humans everywhere (Revelation 14:6). This end-time message asks us to obey and honor God in all that we do. God now works as our Judge. So, we must respect His commands and obey His law (Revelation 14:7). To "fear God" (Revelation 14:7, KJV) is to obey and respect Him. Fearing God is about how we think too. To fear God means we live to please God. We must put Him first in all our thoughts. Then we will want to obey God with our whole hearts and minds. This thought and feeling will lead us to live holy lives (Proverbs 3:7; Acts 9:31; 1 Peter 2:17). The First Angel's Message also invites us to "give glory" to God (Revelation 14:7, KJV). We do that by honoring God in every part of our lives.



The First Angel's Message helps us to remember that now is the time when God will judge the people on the earth.

Read Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14 and 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20. How do these verses help us understand what it means to both "fear God" and give glory to Him?

We live at a time when most people do not want to be responsible for what they do wrong. Millions of people feel that they do not have to answer to anyone at all. The First Angel's Message helps us to remember that now is the time when God will judge the people on the earth. So, we must be responsible for our actions. There is a connection between honoring and obeying God, and His work as our Judge. Obedience comes from a saving friendship with Jesus. Only His holy life is good enough to save us at this time. We are safe because He is right with God. In Him we live to give glory to God's Name in all that we do.

Read Revelation 14:7; Revelation 4:11; Genesis 2:1–3; and Exodus 20:8–11. What is the basic reason for all true worship? How does the Sabbath show this reason to us?

Satan has attacked the Sabbath. He knows that the Sabbath is at the center of worship. The Sabbath honors Jesus as the One who made the earth. The Sabbath is God's invitation to everyone everywhere to " 'worship him who made the heavens and the earth' " (Revelation 14:7, NIV). This is an important announcement for this time. Most people believe false ideas about how the earth was made.

GOD'S FINAL INVITATION (Revelation 14:8)

Read Revelation 14:8; Revelation 17:3–6; and Revelation 18:1–4. What do we learn about spiritual Babylon from these verses?

In the book of Revelation, “Babylon” is a word picture for a false religious power. This false religious power teaches people that their own good works save them. This lie is only one of Babylon’s many false teachings. This false religious power also teaches people to respect man-made ideas and ways of life that go against Bible truth. Babylon praises humans and their good works above Jesus and His holy life. Babylon puts the commands of human religious teachers above the commands of God. In the Old Testament, Babylon was the center of the worship of false gods, sun worship, and the belief that the soul lives on after the body dies. Modern Babylon mixes many of Old Testament Babylon’s religious beliefs and ways of life into its worship today. God’s end-time message to our dying planet is the message that only Jesus and His holy life save us. That is why God warns us, “ ‘She is destroyed! The great [big and powerful] city of Babylon is destroyed! . . . Come out of that city, my people, so that you will not share in her sins. Then you will not suffer any of the terrible punishment she will get’ ” (Revelation 18:2, 4, ERV). God started the Seventh-day Adventist Church to announce the message of Jesus fully. That means we are commanded to bring people’s attention to everything Jesus taught. We must announce the One who is “the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6, KJV). We must show how the mistakes and faults of Babylon compare to Jesus’ Bible truths.

Read Revelation 14:7, 9–11. What two different things are being worshiped in these verses?

Revelation 14 shows two different acts of worship. (1) There is the worship of the One who made the sky and the earth. (2) There is the worship of the wild sea-animal power. These two acts of worship show us what the final war between good and evil will be about: the Sabbath. The true Sabbath is a sign of the rest, hope, and trust we have in Jesus to save us and come again as our King. The false sabbath is a sign of human ideas and man-made laws.



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“The cross on Calvary shows every person who accepts Jesus how much a soul is worth.”

ADDITIONAL THOUGHT: “God commanded the people of Israel during Bible times to stand as His witnesses on this earth. God commands His church today to do the same thing. God separated the Seventh-day Adventist Church from other churches and from the people on the earth. God used truth the same as a sharp knife to cut His people away from the other churches. The truth God used to separate His people was the First, Second, and Third Angels’ Messages. God separated His people to bring them close to Himself. God gave His people His law and the special messages for this time. God expects His people to share these Bible truths with everyone on earth. God asked Israel to do the same thing in Bible times when He gave them His holy laws.

“The Three Angels of Revelation 14 are a word picture. They show us the people who accept the Three Angels’ Messages and warn everyone on the earth. Jesus says to His followers: ‘You are [the same as] the light that shines for the world to see.’ Matthew 5:14 [ERV]. The cross on Calvary shows every person who accepts Jesus how much a soul is worth. ‘Jesus said to the followers, “Go everywhere in the world. Tell the Good News to everyone.”’ Mark 16:15 [ICB]. We must not let anything stop us from doing this work. It is the most important work for our time. . . . Jesus showed how much He loved humans when He died on the cross to save them. This same love will cause Jesus’ followers to work.

“Jesus very gladly accepts every human who gives himself fully to Him. Jesus joins humans to God. Then Jesus uses us to communicate His love to everyone on earth. This love is a mystery. It caused Jesus to become a human and come to earth. Talk about this love. Pray about it. Sing about it. Fill the whole earth with the message of Jesus’ truth.”—Ellen G. White, *Counsels for the Church*, pages 58, 59.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- ① How do the Three Angels’ Messages in Revelation 14 show us the reason for the Seventh-day Adventist Church and why we are here on this earth?
- ② Every week, God commands us to remember Him as the One who made us and saves us. How does this Bible truth help us understand why the Sabbath is important?
- ③ We must be gentle and kind when warning people about Babylon and the wild sea animal’s mark. How can we share these Bible truths in the best way possible?

WHAT JESUS MEANS TO ME

The old woman listens carefully in Sabbath School in southeast Asia. You can tell that she studies the Bible a lot. She has answered all the questions in her Bible study guide. Many verses are underlined in her Bible. In class, she gives money to help the church do its work worldwide. The woman is known as “Grandmother.”

U.S. church leader Gregory Whitsett met with Grandmother after church. He asked her why she left her non-Christian religion to become a Seventh-day Adventist.

Grandmother told a sad story. When she was five years old, her parents died in an accident. Then evil spirits attacked her for many years. She went to medical doctors and to spiritual mediums. Mediums are people who talk to spirits. But the medicine they gave Grandmother only helped her for a little while.

Soon, an Adventist pastor moved next door. Grandmother watched people come to his house every Friday evening. She stood at his gate to find out what was happening. That is when she heard the music coming from his house. Peace filled her as she listened to the music each week. Then the pastor learned about her spirit problems. Grandmother agreed to let him pray for her. Soon the evil spirits left her for good. Her heart filled with thankfulness. She accepted Jesus and joined the Adventist Church.

Gregory Whitsett also is the manager of the Center for East Asian Religions. The center is part of the Adventist Church’s Global Mission work. Gregory asked Grandmother to explain what Jesus meant to her.

The old woman answered in her own language. Then a woman told Grandmother’s words to Gregory in English. “Jesus means everything to me,” she said. “He healed me. He gives me peace. I talk to everyone I meet about Jesus. I am an old woman. I don’t have much longer to live. I love Jesus so much that I decided to be Adventist in my next life too.”

Her next life? The woman who shared in English what Grandmother said was shocked. This same woman had studied the Bible with Grandmother in the past. The woman thought that Grandmother had fully stopped believing in wrong ideas from her old religion.

Grandmother’s experience is nothing new. Many people from other religions have trouble giving up old beliefs after they become Christians. That is why the Center for East Asian Religions, along with other Global Mission centers, was started. Learn more at GlobalMissionCenter.org. Please pray for the work of the centers and for people with Grandmother’s views.



She stood at the gate to find out what was happening.

