

God's Everlasting
Gospel

*“Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus”
(Revelation 14:12, NKJV).*



God's last-day messages will be heard throughout the world. The only thing standing in the way will be our willingness to accept them—just as the only thing we have to do to get a drink is put a cup under the waterspout.

Introduction

Removing the Chains

2 Cor. 4:3, 4;
2 Pet. 3:9;
Rev. 14:6, 12

We were sitting in an empty classroom at Michigan State University—two people, on two separate life paths, with two completely different worldviews. As Josh continued to tell me in full detail how much he despised Christianity, I asked him one of my last survey questions, “What evidence would you need in order to believe in a God or a higher power?” With his mind already fully made up on being an atheist, he plainly stated, “There is no evidence. Even if He presented Himself to me now, I wouldn’t believe it.”

“What evidence would you need in order to believe in a God or a higher power?”

How much it broke my heart hearing that sentence, because I saw the chain of lies that he was trapped in. A chain of lies that most times, our hearts won’t let us break out of. In fact, they were the same lies that I used to be trapped in, and that much of our world is trapped in today too. It’s the kind of blindness that is talked about in 2 Corinthians. “But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them” (2 Cor. 4:3, 4, NKJV).

It is a blindness that Satan has spread throughout our homes, schools, work places, in our politics, relationships, cultures, societies, and our world, and that he continues to spread with every passing second. Thankfully, the Bible says in Revelation, “Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people” (Rev. 14:6, NKJV). The only message of hope that is able to lift the veil and heal the blind.

Revelation brings to light the fact that Satan will seem to have the victory in the last days by getting most of the world to choose to worship the beast and receive his mark. But God, with all of His glory, will have His remnant. The Lord will have His people who will stand against the chain of lies that Satan has encompassed our world with. In the three angels’ messages we see that God’s people will stand firm on His truth, and the everlasting gospel will be preached. “Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus” (verse 12, NKJV).

During this study, that is what we will be seeking to have—a desire to be God’s remnant people and to understand the message that Revelation gives to us in these last days. God’s desire is that no one should perish but that all would come to repentance (2 Pet. 3:9). Thankfully, with that beautiful desire, He made a way for every single one of us through His Son, Jesus Christ.

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Rev. 14:6

Evidence *God's Rallying Cry*

General Dwight Eisenhower had been preparing for months to attack the Nazi's stronghold in Normandy. His well-trained Allied forces were waiting for the marching orders, and D-day was set in stone. On June 6, 1944, he wrote these fateful words, "The eyes of the world are upon you. The hopes and prayers of liberty-loving people everywhere march with you." He then added, "Your task will not be an easy one. Your enemy is well trained, well equipped and battle-hardened. He will fight savagely. But this is the year 1944! . . . The tide has turned! The free men of the world are marching together to Victory!"¹

Heaven's response to the crisis is found in Revelation 14:6.

In the great conflict between Christ and Satan, D-day is not a future occurrence; it is now. The enemy of souls is fighting savagely because, in biblical terms, "he knows he has but a short time" (Rev. 12:12, NABRE).

Revelation 13 unfolds the actions of Satan, who has devised plans to secure worship for himself using church and state. Both champion the cause of creating a mark (a false day of worship) that will inevitably be the test for every nation, tribe, tongue, and people (Rev. 13:7, 8).

Heaven's response to the crisis is found in Revelation 14:6. The tide turns as it outlines God's rallying cry prior to the second coming of Christ. This message is delivered universally, as indicated by the angel flying in the midst of heaven. The words *with a loud voice* tell us that the message will be given so that all will hear. The message includes a call to worship the only true God on the true day of worship. This means that all people must receive light in order to choose the right side in this great conflict.

In Greek, the word *angel* translates as "messenger," one who brings glad tidings. As Seventh-day Adventists, we cannot read this passage without understanding that God has called us to proclaim a distinct message to all people. He has also promised us His presence (Matt. 28:18–20). The tide turned long ago, and though there is a battle-hardened enemy who will fight savagely, we have a victorious Christ who stands by us as we fulfill His great commission.

REACT

What are some biblical examples of God's promised assurance in fulfilling the gospel commission?

1. "D-day Statement to Soldiers, Sailor, and Airmen of the Allied Expeditionary Force, 6/44," Collection DDE-EPRE: Eisenhower, Dwight D: Papers, Pre-Presidential, 1916–1952; Dwight D. Eisenhower Library; National Archives and Records Administration, National Archives, accessed May 4, 2018, <https://www.archives.gov/historical-docs/todays-doc/?dod-date=606>.

Logos On Display

Rev. 14:6–12

Many Christians want to live in anonymity away from public scrutiny. They might feel insecure about being on display as a true follower of Jesus and may not think themselves good enough or capable enough to live as a demonstration before others. Yet the three angels' messages prepare a people who are on display before the universe just the way God intends them to be.

The First Angel (Ezek. 20:12; Rom. 12:1; 1 Cor. 6:19; 10:31; Rev. 4:11; 14:6–7)

Revelation is designed to get God's people ready to see Him at His return. At the heart of the book, three angels sound the most important messages for those living on the edge of eternity. Their bold proclamations are a call to restore lost truth and warn the world against false worship.

Every decision made is a chance to lift up God and do His will.

The first angel sounds his message with a call to fear, glorify, and worship God (Rev 14:7). Some might think it strange that God wants us to fear Him. While the Greek word for *fear* can mean “to be afraid of one,” it can also mean “to treat with deference or reverential obedience.”¹ God wants us to reverence Him by obeying as He leads us.

This reverence leads into the call for us to glorify God (verse 7). He is looking for people who don't compartmentalize Him to one day a week but honor Him with all of their being (1 Cor. 10:31). God wants us to recognize that we are His and His Spirit dwells within us (1 Cor. 6:19). He is asking for a people to make His glory the focus of their lives. Every decision made is a chance to lift up God and do His will. It's about living life as an act of worship before Him (Rom. 12:1), which is the third component of the first angel's message.

God is calling people back to Sabbath worship (Rev. 14:7) as a sign that they are completely devoted to following Him (Ezek. 20:12). Revelation 14:7 clearly alludes to Exodus 20:11—the Sabbath commandment, not just as a day to worship but also as the day to worship in recognition of our Creator. God is worthy of our worship because He is our Creator (Rev. 4:11), and this sign of God's power is something Satan directly attacks.

A careful comparison of Revelation 14:7 and Exodus 20:11 will demonstrate that the entire verse from Exodus is not quoted. Revelation 14:7 says, “Worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea,” and instead of finishing with “and all that in them is,” he says, “and the fountains of waters.” Why? “Fountains of waters” are called out in the context of judgment. “The hour of [God's] judgment has come” (Rev. 14:7, NKJV). “Fountains of waters” refers to Genesis 7:11, when the fountains of God's judgment were poured out on the earth during the

Flood. The first angel's message is saying, in the last days there is going to be a judgment, and if you want to be ready when Jesus comes, you need to be worshipping Him, honoring Him, and being loyal to Him no matter the cost.

The Other Angels (Rev 14:8–11; 18:2, 3; 20:9)

The second angel's message tells us that God has triumphed over Satan by announcing, "Babylon is fallen" (Rev. 14:8). The name *Babylon* means confusion. The ancient city's teachings on death, image worship, and sun worship constituted a false religious system that stood directly against God's truth. In Revelation, Babylon is the symbol for all false, man-made religious systems that spread confusion among all nations (Rev. 18:2, 3). This is a message that God has emerged victorious and truth has prevailed.

The third angel sounds the most serious warning ever given to humanity against worshipping the beast (Rev. 14:9–11). It is a warning that must be taken seriously with consequences of "fire and brimstone" (verse 10). The scene of that torment is given in greater detail in chapter 20, where the wrath of God is poured out in the form of a devouring fire (verse 9). Those who worship the beast will not be written in God's book of life. They have made their decision to follow their own will rather than God's. As a result, God casts them away from His presence. "Anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire" (verse 15, NKJV).

The Everlasting Gospel (Matt. 24:14; Rev. 14:4, 6, 12, 14, 15)

As these three angels give their messages, God is telling people all over the world what His faithful followers look like. They are described as commandment keepers and possessing the faith of Jesus Christ (Rev. 14:12). This is the culminating experience of accepting the gospel and following all Bible truth. Revelation describes this outworking of truth in the heart with the phrase describing its fullness, "the everlasting gospel" (verse 6). The gospel is what transforms us into faithful followers of Christ for the world to see.

We become the demonstration to the world of biblical Christianity. God's people are not hiding in fear but proclaiming with boldness the everlasting gospel to the world (verse 6; Matt. 24:14). Revelation 14:4 reads, "These are the ones . . ." (NKJV), and verse 12 continues to point out God's people, "Here are those . . ." (NKJV). God has a people prepared to meet Him when He comes back, and this group is on public display. When the gospel transforms us, the world cannot help but notice!

REACT

In what way is the gospel best communicated: (a) through spoken words, (b) through intentional acts of kindness, (c) at church, or (d) in my everyday life? Why?

1. W. E. Vine, Merrill F. Unger, and William White Jr., *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1985).

Testimony Faithful Men

Rev. 14:6–12

“The theme of greatest importance is the third angel’s message, embracing the messages of the first and second angels. All should understand the truths contained in these messages and demonstrate them in daily life, for this is essential to salvation. We shall have to study earnestly, prayerfully, in order to understand these grand truths; and our power to learn and comprehend will be taxed to the utmost.”¹

“To prepare a people to stand in the day of God, a great work of reform was to be accomplished. God saw that many of His professed people were not building for eternity, and in His mercy He was about to send a message of warning to arouse them from their stupor and lead them to make ready for the coming of the Lord.

**“We shall have to study earnestly, prayerfully,
in order to understand these grand truths.”**

“ . . . The first of these warnings announces the approaching judgment. . . . This message is declared to be a part of ‘the everlasting gospel.’ The work of preaching the gospel has not been committed to angels, but has been entrusted to men. Holy angels have been employed in directing this work, they have in charge the great movements for the salvation of men; but the actual proclamation of the gospel is performed by the servants of Christ upon the earth.

“Faithful men, who were obedient to the promptings of God’s Spirit and the teachings of His word, were to proclaim this warning to the world. They were those who had taken heed to the ‘sure word of prophecy,’ the ‘light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the daystar arise.’ 2 Peter 1:19. They had been seeking the knowledge of God more than all hid treasures, counting it ‘better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold.’ Proverbs 3:14. And the Lord revealed to them the great things of the kingdom. ‘The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him; and He will show them His covenant.’ Psalm 25:14.”²

REACT

Why is it so important that humanity was entrusted with the proclamation of the gospel? What could we as Christians be missing out on by not fulfilling our responsibility?

1. Ellen G. White, *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 12, p. 212.

2. Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, pp. 311, 312.

Matthew 13;
Revelation 14

How-to *Accepting His Provision*

Christ's atonement on the cross is an offer of salvation to anyone who is willing to accept it. Imagine someone drowning in a lake when, suddenly, a life preserver lands in front of the person. The option of rescue is available, and it is now up to the drowning individual to reach out and grab ahold of the life preserver. In the final events of the great controversy, God presents a final message of mercy to the entire world, giving them the opportunity to be saved.

God has a final sorting process.

In the end times, God has a final sorting process to figure out who has taken hold of that life preserver and who has not. Just like the produce that fruit farmers ship to facilities with quality control conveyor lines, those who are bad will be sorted out from the good. How can we make sure that we accept His provision and deny the mark of the beast? Here are some suggestions:

Study the Bible (Ps. 119:11). There is a storm of false doctrine ready to ensnare anyone who does not diligently study their Bible. We must have a good understanding of Scripture so that we are not lured away by unsound doctrine. The best way to discern between truth and error is to be so familiar with the truth that when the slightest bit of error is presented, we will easily be able to tell the difference.

Focus on Jesus (2 Cor. 3:18). One reason why we may reject salvation is that we love sin. As we behold the Lamb of God on the cross of Calvary, we will fall more in love with Him, and the things of this world will grow strangely dim. We are counseled to spend a thoughtful hour each day in contemplation of the life of Christ, especially the closing scenes.¹

Look forward to the second coming of Jesus (Luke 12:35–40). If we have the correct understanding of the times we are living in, our hearts will be filled with joy as we look forward to Jesus' second coming. It will be difficult for doubts and discouragements to steal our blessed hope and for us to become lazy in our devotion to God. As the end draws nearer, God's people will be faced with a tremendous amount of temptations and deceptions. Our only safety will be found in our reliance on God's ability to get us through.

REACT

1. Why do you think deception is so dangerous?
2. What can you do to counteract Satan's efforts to deceive the masses?

1. Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 83.

Opinion

*The Final Pages:
From Fear to Hope*

2 Tim. 1:7;
Rev. 1:3; 12:12

We believe that we are now living in the time of the end. In the book of Revelation, we are blessed to have access to God's unfolding plan and the events surrounding His second return. Personally though, the study of Revelation hasn't always been a top priority in my devotional life. When I was younger, it seemed scary and overwhelming, and I only read it with all the lights on. As I grew in my understanding of Christ and His love, I realized that in Revelation, Jesus is revealing the greatest part of our story: the end. Have you ever been reading a really good story and then decided not to finish it? That seems very unlikely. If we love the beginning and the middle of the Bible so much (enough to base our lives on it and call ourselves Christians), then we should be even more excited to explore and understand the ending as well.

**Maybe some of us are afraid of the future
because of uncertainty.**

Revelation points forward to the time when we will be able to live in perfect harmony with God for all eternity. However, for God's purpose to be fulfilled requires a complete transformation of this world from one of sin and destruction, where Satan's intent has been laid bare, to love and perfection, where God's character is fully vindicated. When viewed in the context of God's love for us, we can see His redemptive plan. Maybe some of us are afraid of the future because of uncertainty, but in Revelation, God has shown us the future to give us a hope and peace that will sustain us through the difficult times.

Whether by lulling us into a state of complacency or by misrepresenting the message so that we are too afraid to read it, Satan puts great effort into convincing Christians not to open and study the book of Revelation. However, in Revelation 1:3 Christ promises us that we will receive a blessing if we focus our study on the prophecies and the words written in the book. It is of utmost importance, then, that we navigate and understand the contents of its pages with surety in God's plan for our future success. Let us go forward, not in fear, but in certainty that our God reigns above and our future is sure.

REACT

1. How can we keep the study of Revelation an integral part of our devotional lives so that we can be better prepared to face the uncertainties of living in the end times?
2. How can you share the importance of reading the book of Revelation with someone else?

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Matt. 24:14

Exploration

The Everlasting Gospel

CONCLUDE

In this world full of blindness and confusion, God is calling and empowering us to be His witnesses to share the everlasting gospel in the context of the three angels' messages to all those in our sphere of influence and beyond. This gospel is something to be obeyed, for there are serious repercussions if it is not (2 Thess. 1:8; 1 Pet. 4:17; Rev. 14:9–11). It is a call for people everywhere to take sides between the great drama of the ages, to choose either to be loyal to God and worship Him or to worship the beast and his image.

CONSIDER

- Designing a collage of hand drawings or photos depicting each of the three angels' messages to present to your class or at an art show.
- Composing a song based on Revelation 14:6–12 to share with your Sabbath School class or church or at your school's talent show.
- Reaching out to a friend who might be struggling to make a decision to accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior. Share what impact the everlasting gospel and the cleansing blood of Jesus has made in your life. Ask your friend to make a decision to follow Jesus.
- Inviting a friend to attend a Daniel and Revelation prophecy seminar to learn how the Bible prophecies and God's promises can bring comfort and encouragement and take away any fear you might have of the last days.
- Giving a Bible study about the three angels' messages to a friend.
- Memorizing Revelation 14:6–12.
- Preparing a sermon series on the three angels' messages to preach at a Week of Prayer at your school or at your local church.

CONNECT

Matthew 24:9–14.

Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, pp. 308–312; chap. 36, "The Impending Conflict," and chap. 37, "The Scriptures a Safeguard."

Russell Burrill, *Hope When the World Falls Apart* (Seminars Unlimited, 2003), chap. 25.

Raymond F. Cottrell, *Beyond Tomorrow* (Southern Publishing Association, 1963), pp. 285–332.

J. N. Andrews, *The Three Messages of Revelation 14:6–12* (Review and Herald®, 1892).