

God's Final Message of Mercy



SABBATH—APRIL 1

READ FOR THIS WEEK'S LESSON: Matthew 24:14; Revelation 14:14; Acts 1:9–11; Mark 4:26–29; Revelation 14:17–20.

MEMORY VERSE: "I looked and saw a white cloud. I saw someone like [who looked the same as] the Son of Man sitting on the cloud. He had a big gold crown on his head and a sharp harvest knife in his hand. Another angel came out of God's temple. He called [shouted] in a loud voice to the one who was sitting on the cloud. He said, 'Take your knife and cut the harvest [crop; grain]. The time has come to take in the harvest because the earth is ready' " (Revelation 14:14, 15, WE).



God gives His people whatever Bible truths they need for their times.

GOD always communicates with His people. God gives His people whatever Bible truths they need for their times. God warned His people about the Flood (Genesis 6:7). God told His people about the First Coming of Jesus (Daniel 9:24–27). God also told His people that He will judge them before the Second Coming (Daniel 7:9, 10; Daniel 8:14). God warned His people about what will happen in the end times (Revelation 12–14). In these final days of human history, God sent a special message to everyone on earth and to His people. This message will help us get ready to meet Jesus. This warning is named the Three Angels' Messages.

The Three Angels' Messages are Jesus' final messages of mercy. In these messages, God tells us to trust everything that Jesus did in the past and does now in heaven to save us. The choices we make during the end times will depend on the choices we make now. So, we must get ready today.

EVERLASTING CHOICES (Matthew 24:14)

Revelation is Jesus' final message of mercy to the sinners on this earth. For 6,000 years, this planet has been filled with sin and evil. Soon, a day will come when all people on planet Earth will make their final decision for Jesus or against Him. We cannot change our decision when Jesus comes. At that time, God's people will share His final message of mercy to everyone on earth. This message is the Good News that Jesus saves us from sin.

Read about the end times in Matthew 24:14 and compare it with Revelation 14:6. In Matthew 24:14, what promise about the Good News did Jesus give His followers?

Jesus promised His followers: “ ‘This Good News about the holy nation [kingdom] of God must be preached over all the earth’ ” (Matthew 24:14, NLV). When will this promise happen? Jesus shows us in Revelation 14:6. In the end times, the Good News “is for every country, tribe [family group], language, and nation [people group]” (Revelation 14:6, WE).

Three times in Revelation 22 Jesus says that He will come soon (Revelation 22:7, 12, 20). Then Jesus adds, “ ‘Let the person who does wrong keep on doing wrong. Let the evil person continue to be evil. Let the person who does right keep on doing what is right. And let the holy person continue to be holy’ ” (Revelation 22:11, NIV). The book of Revelation shows us that God will lead every person on earth to decide for Jesus or against Him.

Of course, we choose for Jesus or against Him in the choices we make, big or small, every day. Now, today, and every day we must choose to show faith in Jesus and to obey His commandments. “We show that we love God when we obey his laws. His laws are not hard to obey” (1 John 5:3, WE). As Ellen G. White says, “Jesus doesn't change our thoughts and feelings at His Second Coming. We must change now. Our future depends on the choices we make daily.”—*Last Day Events*, page 295, adapted.

How does God change our thoughts and feelings? How does His mercy help us to become stronger Christians? We want to be the same as Jesus in our hearts. What can we do to allow the Holy Spirit to change us?



In the end times, the good news “is for every country, tribe [family group], language, and nation [people group]” (Revelation 14:6, WE).

THE SON OF MAN COMES BACK (Revelation 14:14)

Revelation 14 has important Bible verses about God's end-time message to His people and everyone else on earth. An important part of this message is the promise that Jesus will come back. Jesus said, "In the future you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right side of the Powerful One. And you will see the Son of Man coming on clouds in the sky" (Mark 14:62, ICB).



The Jesus who comes for us is the same Jesus who lived with us on earth.

What name is used for Jesus when He comes back to earth? Read Revelation 14:14 for the answer. Why do you think John uses this name for Jesus?

Jesus named Himself "Son of Man" 82 times in the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Son of Man is one of Jesus' favorites names for Himself. Jesus liked this name because it shows that He is one of us. Jesus is a Savior who understands us. He knows the sins we fight against. He has passed the tests that we must pass in this life. Jesus, the Son of Man, will come to take us home. The Jesus who comes for us is the same Jesus who lived with us on earth. Jesus is the only One who can save us because He became one of us. As a human, Jesus met Satan's hate. Satan tried to get Jesus to sin. But Jesus won the fight against Satan.

Read the Bible verses below. What do these Bible verses teach us about Jesus, the Son of Man?

Matthew 16:27 _____

Matthew 24:27, 30 _____

Matthew 25:31, 32 _____

Notice some important parts of these verses: (1) Jesus is the Son of Man. Jesus is coming with His angels to take us to heaven. (2) Jesus will separate the sheep from the goats. (This separation is a word picture for God's work as Judge.) (3) God will make a final decision about the future of all countries and people.

What does the name "Son of Man" tell you about Jesus? Jesus was God. But He became one of us. He never sinned. What hope does this Bible truth give you?

GOD’S WORK AS JUDGE IN HEAVEN (Acts 1:9–11)

Compare Revelation 14:14 and Acts 1:9–11. How are these verses alike? What things do you see in both verses?

John says, “I looked and saw a white cloud. I saw someone like [who looked the same as] the Son of Man sitting on the cloud” (Revelation 14:14, WE). After Jesus woke up from the dead, He went to heaven. In Acts 1:9, Luke tells us about this time. After Jesus finished talking to His followers, He went up in the sky. Jesus’ followers “watched him going. Then a cloud hid him, and they did not see him any more” (Acts 1:9, WE). Jesus left in a cloud of angels. He will come back with a cloud of angels. Angels stood there with Jesus’ followers when Jesus went up to heaven. The angels said, “ ‘You men of [from] the country of Galilee, why do you stand looking up into heaven [the sky]? This same Jesus Who was taken from you into heaven will return [come back] in the same way you saw Him go up into heaven’ ” (Acts 1:11, NLV). Do you see the words “this same Jesus”? This same Jesus is the Son of Man who walked the dirty streets in Nazareth. This same Jesus healed the sick in the crowded streets in Jerusalem and in the villages in Israel. This same Jesus preached to the people on the grassy hillsides of Galilee. This same Jesus is coming again.

In the book of Daniel, we read about the Son of Man and the work that God does as Judge in the end times.

Why does Daniel name Jesus the “Son of Man”? Read Daniel 7:9, 10, 13, 14 for the answer. In these verses, we read about the time when God will judge His people. What is the Son of Man doing during that time? Why should that information comfort us?

In Daniel 7:9, 10, Daniel sees the court in heaven. Many angels stand around God’s throne. God is ready to judge His people. God opens the books. These books are records of our lives. In Daniel 7:13, 14, Jesus, the Son of Man, comes to God the Father. God gives Jesus His everlasting kingdom. God’s work as Judge shows everyone in heaven that He and Jesus did everything to save humans. God’s work as Judge shows that He and His people are innocent and that Satan is a liar.



Jesus left in a cloud of angels. He will come back with a cloud of angels.

THE WINNER'S CROWN (Mark 4:26–29)

In the book of Revelation, John shows us a picture of Jesus. Jesus is “the Son of Man. He had a crown of gold on His head. In His hand He had a sharp knife for cutting grain” (Revelation 14:14, NLV). The word written as “crown” comes from the word “**stephanos**” in the Greek language. A “**stephanos**” is a winner’s crown. When an athlete won an important contest, he got a “**stephanos**” or crown of honor.

Jesus wore a crown of thorns. This crown is a word picture for shame. People hated Jesus and rejected Him. People spit on Jesus. They made fun of Him. They beat Jesus and whipped Him. But now Jesus wears a crown of honor. When He comes again, Jesus will be King of kings and Lord of lords.

Compare Revelation 14:15 and Mark 4:26–29. What is the same between these verses? What are they both talking about?



A “stephanos” is a winner’s crown. When an athlete won an important contest, he got a “stephanos” or crown of honor.

In Revelation 14:15, an angel comes out of God’s temple. The angel cries to Jesus: “ ‘Cut the grain. The time has come. The earth is ready to be harvested’ ” (Revelation 14:15, NIV). The harvest is a word picture that shows the time of the Second Coming. The angel tells Jesus that it is time to go get His children and bring them home to heaven.

Jesus uses word pictures from farming in the New Testament. Jesus often uses the word picture of the harvest or collecting crops to show the good news. The good news is the same as a seed. God plants this “seed” in the hearts of His people and helps it grow strong.

“The seed starts to grow into a plant. This growing plant shows how spiritual life starts and grows in a Christian’s heart. Nature shows us that life must grow. The same is true in our spiritual life. If we don’t grow, we don’t have life. The plant must grow or die. Growth is silent and something we can’t see happening. The same thing is true about how we grow as Christians. God always will help us to improve while we grow. So, we may become perfect in every part of our lives as we grow. We don’t become holy people overnight. God changes our thoughts and feelings during our whole lifetime. When we ask God for help, He changes us. Our knowledge will grow, too.”—Ellen G. White, *Christ’s Object Lessons*, pages 65, 66, adapted.

WHEN THE CROP IS READY (Revelation 14:17–20)

In Revelation 14, we read about two harvests or times when crops are collected. The harvest of golden grain or wheat shows us God’s holy people. Then we see the harvest of grapes. The grapes are covered in blood. These grapes show us the people who have rejected God. Both “harvests” are ripe. They are ready to be picked.

Read Revelation 14:17–20. Look at verse 19, which says: “So the angel swung [moved] his blade [sharp knife for cutting grain] over [across] the earth. He gathered [collected] its grapes. Then he threw them into a huge [big] winepress [a large container used to make wine]. The winepress stands [is a word picture] for God’s anger” (Revelation 14:19, Nlrv). What does this verse show us? Also read Revelation 14:10; Revelation 15:1; and Revelation 16:1 to help answer the question.

John tells us, “Another angel came from the altar. He had power [control] over fire” (Revelation 14:18, WE). God puts this angel in charge of the special fire that He will use to punish sinners after He finishes His work as Judge. Then the harvest will be ripe. God will not let sin go on any more. Evil things have happened in the past. But things are going to get much worse before history is finished. A loving God has done everything He can do for us. He died on the cross for our sins. “Christ [Jesus] had no sin. But God made him become sin. God did this [made Jesus become sin] for us so that in Christ we could become right with God” (2 Corinthians 5:21, ICB).

What more could God do for us than die on the cross? God can’t do anything to save people who reject His Holy Spirit again and again and refuse to accept His mercy.

Revelation 14 is a powerful end-time message. God’s people will show His love and mercy to everyone in heaven and on earth. Satan’s followers will show lives of selfishness, hate, and lawbreaking. One group of people has the love that’s in the heart of Jesus. The other group shows the hate that’s in the heart of Satan.

Everyone in heaven will see how God’s end-time people behave. This group will be different from any group who ever lived. Humans and angels also will see sin and evil as they haven’t seen them before. Both humans and angels will see that obeying God’s law is the best way to live.



In Revelation 14, we read about two harvests or times when crops are collected.



If we think good and loving thoughts, we will have strong minds.

ADDITIONAL THOUGHT: “Here is an important rule for our minds and our hearts: we become changed by whatever we look at and think about. Little by little over time, the mind will become changed by the things we love to think about. We won’t change for the better if we don’t believe in good behavior or in Bible truth. If we live only to please ourselves, we will never become who God planned for us to be. Worse, we will become less than we should be. God’s mercy is the only thing that can help us to change and become better. If God did not help us, we would keep getting worse and worse.”—Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, page 555, adapted.

Slowly, over time, our thoughts and feelings change because of how we feel and think. If we think good and loving thoughts, we will have strong minds. If we think ugly and selfish thoughts, we will become the same as Satan in our hearts and minds. So, we must be careful about what we think and feel. We must care about God and spiritual things. Then we will grow in faith. Our spiritual lives will be strong. Don’t make the mistake that some people make who say, “Well, I know that one day, Satan’s final attack on God’s people will come. But when it does, I will do what’s right.” God asks us right now, at this moment, to give our lives to Him. If we delay giving ourselves to God now, we will have a hard time obeying God later on. Then we will believe Satan’s lies more and more.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- ① How does God’s mercy save and change us? In Revelation 14:14–20, we read about an important teaching that can help us better understand the answer. This teaching is named the Harvest Rule. A harvest happens when farmers collect their crops from their fields. Revelation 14 uses this idea about collecting crops to show us Jesus’ end-time work as Judge of the whole earth. In verses 14–20, we see the Son of Man, who is sitting on a cloud. As we know, the Son of Man is another name for Jesus. In this word picture, Jesus cuts two crops. One crop is the saved, the other crop is the lost. The two crops show us Jesus separates at the end time. How does the Harvest Rule show us that being saved and being changed are connected?
- ② Jesus also is named the Son of Man. Why should this name give you hope as you wait for the Second Coming? Why do we feel better knowing that a Human is in heaven right now and that He is asking God, our Judge, to help us?

FIGHTERS GET BAPTIZED

The Philippines was at war with its own people on Mindoro Island. The fighting continued for 52 years. Government leaders offered the fighters money and land in exchange for peace. But the fighters refused the offer. The fighters did not stop fighting. Nothing anyone did made any peace or stopped the war. 40,000 people died in the fights.

In 2017, Adventist World Radio (AWR) started radio shows in Mindoro as part of a plan named TMI. TMI means Total Member Involvement. Involvement means that every church member works hard to bring someone to Jesus. AWR bought time on local radio stations. Local church members gave Bible studies and invited neighbors to Bible meetings. About 1,400 people got baptized at the meetings. The radio programs continued.

In 2019, fighters who were hidden in the green mountains of Mindoro started to listen to AWR's programs on the radio. Many of the fighters decided to give their lives to Jesus. The leader of the fighters was named Ka Martin. Ka didn't understand what was happening to his fighters. So, he started to listen to the AWR programs on the radio, too.

Duane McKey, the president of AWR, tells what happened next. "Ka saw his fighters were leaving him. He tried to figure out why. So, he started listening to AWR on the radio."

Ka killed dozens of people in the past, including 21 soldiers. Ka killed them while they slept. He shot them all dead with one of their own machine guns. But as Ka started to listen to AWR on the radio, he decided to give his heart to Jesus."

Soon 700 fighters from the Mindoro mountains gave their hearts to Jesus. This group included Ka Martin and his wife. They put down their weapons and stopped fighting their own people. Then they were baptized at Bible meetings held by workers from AWR. A total of 60,000 people got baptized during those meetings across the Philippines about a year ago.

Duane McKey said, "What bullets didn't do, God did." God used Bible truth to stop a war. God's truth changed the hearts of men and women. God turned fighters into His followers.

The Philippine government leaders forgave the fighters and said they didn't need to go to jail for their crimes. AWR leaders are working with the government and farmers to help the fighters earn a living by farming.

Duane McKey said, "We won't stop the AWR radio programs. The churches are now in charge of the programs. We give them the sermons. Local church members make all this work possible. This story is a perfect example of every member doing something to bring other people to Jesus."

INSIDE
Story
by ANDREW MCCHESENEY



**"What bullets didn't do,
God did."**

