

When God's Glory Fills the Earth With Light



SABBATH—JUNE 17

READ FOR THIS WEEK'S LESSON: 1 Thessalonians 5:1–6; John 8:32; Revelation 18:1; Revelation 4:11; Revelation 5:6, 8, 12.

MEMORY VERSE: “After that I saw another angel coming down from the sky. He had much power [might]. The bright light that shone from him lit up the earth” (Revelation 18:1, WE).



The book of Revelation shows us the most important things that will happen in the end times.

SOONER OR LATER, the end-time happenings that the Bible talks about will come. We don't know when or how everything will happen. But we know enough to see the big picture. We know that a law will be made that will force people to worship on Sunday. This law will reject the fourth commandment. The book of Revelation shows us the most important things that will happen in the end times. Everyone whose name isn't written in the book of life will worship the sea animal and his false god. Everyone who chooses to follow the Lord Jesus Christ and obey His law will have their names written in the book of life. Their names will not be removed. Who cares if we have honor or fame in this life if we have everlasting life with God?

God started the Seventh-day Adventist Church to preach His final message of mercy to everyone on this earth. So, we need to know Bible truth. More than that, we need to be changed by Bible truth. Our lives need to be made new by the Good News about Jesus (read Revelation 14:6). The Good News is a message about Jesus' death for us, His forgiveness, and His mercy to save us from our sins.

GETTING READY FOR THE FINAL FIGHT (1 Thessalonians 5:1–6)

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:1–6. What warning does Paul give us about the final days of human history?

Paul wrote to church members in Thessalonica (a city in Greece) about the Second Coming. Paul told the Christians to “watch and keep your minds awake to what is happening” (1 Thessalonians 5:6, NLV). Paul gave this advice to Christians in his day. So, what would Paul say to us today?

Paul also told church members that they were “people who belong to the light” (1 Thessalonians 5:5, ERV). Church members “are not living in darkness. And so that day [the Second Coming of Christ] will not surprise you like a thief” (1 Thessalonians 5:4, ERV). Jesus used the word “watch” when He talked about prayer (Matthew 24:42; Matthew 26:40, 41, NIV). “To watch” means to understand Bible truth. It means we will be wise about the times we are living in and think about the things that are most important.

Ellen G. White adds: “We know Bible truth about the end times. So, we should get ready for what is soon to happen. What will happen will surprise most of the people on this earth.” —*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 8, page 28, adapted.

What will happen will surprise most people, but it should not surprise Seventh-day Adventists. We don’t know when the final test will come or how it will happen. But we can see enough to know that the test is coming. Today, now, is the best time to get ready and to be ready.

Read about the worldwide kingdoms in Daniel 2. Make a list of the kingdoms that came and went. Everything happened just as God said it would happen. What should this list teach us about how we can trust God’s promises about the future?

Jesus gave us messages about the end times so that we can get ready for His coming. The special messages about time in Daniel, Revelation, and from Ellen G. White show us what will happen in the future.

Paul says not to “sleep” as other people do. What do you think “sleep” is a word picture for? How do we know if we are “sleeping” or if we are really “awake”? If we are “asleep,” what do we need to do to “wake up”?



“To watch” means to understand Bible truth. It means we will be wise about the times we are living in and think about the things that are most important.

KNOWING BIBLE TRUTH (John 8:32)

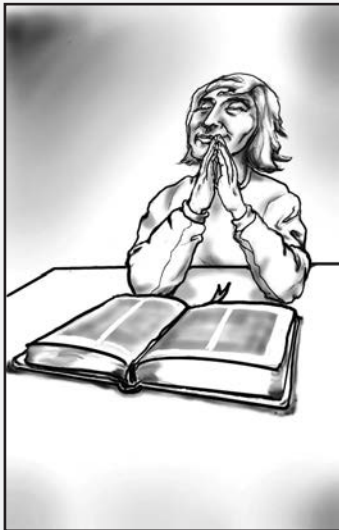
Read John 8:32; John 7:17; and John 17:17. What promises about wisdom and understanding does Jesus give us in these verses? Where do we find spiritual truth?

God's final message to His people warns them to reject the false teachings of spiritual Babylon. God invites them to accept Bible truth. Bible truth is everlasting. As long as we trust the Bible and its teachings, we will not be tricked by Satan in the final test. We will not be tricked by his lie about the Sabbath.

The second angel of Revelation 14 invites us to accept his message. His message tells us to accept Bible truth and not to believe false teachings and Satan's lies.

The third angel warns about the sea animal's mark. As we have seen, an animal in Revelation is a word picture for a kingdom or a religious power. The sea animal of Revelation 13 and 14 grows out of the kingdom of Rome. Then the sea-animal power gets worldwide control of the Christian church during the Dark Ages. In the future, this new religious kingdom of Rome will join with the governments on this earth. This worldwide religious power will try to bring everyone on earth under its control at a time when there will be terrible disasters and wars.

The United States will become the leader in this worldwide plan to bring everyone on earth under the control of the sea-animal power. "Satan will use two false teachings to get control of people's minds. The first false teaching is the lie that the spirit lives forever. The second false teaching is Satan's lie that Sunday is holy. The first lie causes people to accept the false teaching that the dead can communicate with us. The second lie causes people to respect the Roman Catholic Church. The Protestants in the United States will have an important part in Satan's work. The Protestant churches, the Roman Catholic Church, and the people who believe that the dead can communicate with us will join together in agreement. This three-part group will lead the United States government to behave the same way Rome behaved in the Middle Ages. They will hurt anyone who wants to follow Bible truth."—Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, page 588, adapted.



**Bible truth is everlasting.
As long as we trust
the Bible and its teachings,
we will not be tricked
by Satan in the final test.**

THE CHANGE FOR THE BETTER CONTINUES (Revelation 18:1)

God started the Seventh-day Adventist Church. God gave this church a special message for the end times. This message continues to do the work done by other Christians in the past. These Christians worked to make things better in the church. They chose Jesus as their Savior. He is the only One who can save humans. These Christians from the past also believed the Holy Spirit was the One who gave them strength against sin and Satan. These Christians also hoped for Jesus to come back. In the end times, we will continue the work of these Christians. We will announce many Bible truths that other Christians have forgotten and no longer know anything about. One of these Bible truths is the Sabbath.

The Three Angels' Messages and the special messages in Revelation show us our work as a church. We will announce God's final message of mercy to the people on a dying planet. Revelation 14 shows a worldwide church that shares the Good News about Jesus with everyone on the earth.

In Revelation 14, we see three angels. Then, in Revelation 18, we read about a 4th angel. The 4th angel adds strength to the announcement of the first three angels. This message will be the same as a bright light that shines on the whole earth (Revelation 18:1). Revelation 18 talks about the big things that happen before human history ends. Then the Good News about Jesus will win against Satan's lies.

Read about the fourth angel in Revelation 18:1. What three things does John tell us about the fourth angel? (Read also Habakkuk 2:14.)

The angel comes down from God's throne room. God gives this angel a special message. This angel must announce God's final message of mercy again and warn the people on the earth about what will happen.

The fourth angel has "much power [strength]" (Revelation 18:1, NLV). The New Testament word for "power" is "**exousia**" in the Greek language. Jesus uses this word. In Matthew 10:1, Jesus gives His followers "power" when He sends them to do His work. Jesus gives them strength over evil. In Matthew 28:18, 19, Jesus sends them out again. This time, Jesus sends them with "all power" in heaven and on earth to make more followers for Him.



The Three Angels' Messages and the special messages in Revelation show us our work as a church.

GOD FILLS THE WHOLE EARTH WITH HIS LIGHT (Revelation 4:11)

Read about God’s glory in Revelation 4:11; Revelation 5:12; and Revelation 19:1. In Revelation 18:1, God’s glory is the same as a shining light that fills the whole earth. What else do these verses tell us about God’s glory?

The worldwide war between good and evil is about God’s honor. Satan blamed God for not being fair. Satan says that God commands us to worship Him but that He doesn’t give us anything. Satan says that God’s law limits our freedom and our joy.

Jesus’ life, death, and waking up from the dead show us that Satan’s words are lies. Jesus came to this planet full of sin that is the same as a pit filled with snakes. Jesus came to save us. On the cross, Jesus showed that Satan’s words against God were lies. Jesus also showed that God is both loving and fair. As God’s end-time people, we show His glory. What is His glory? His glory is His love. We show God’s love to a planet filled with selfish people. In that way, the whole earth is filled with God’s glory.



In Revelation 18:1, God’s glory is the same as a shining light that fills the whole earth.

How does God show His mercy to Moses? Read Exodus 33:18, 19 for the answer. How do these verses show us what God’s glory is?

As we just saw, God’s glory is His love. We must be filled with God’s love. Our lives must be changed by God’s saving love. Then the earth will be filled with the glory of God.

When we show God’s love in our personal lives, we show God’s glory to the people around us. We will announce God’s final message to a planet that is filled with sin and evil. We will do the work of the three angels who fly across the sky. Their message is: “ ‘Fear God and give him praise’ ” (Revelation 14:7, ERV). This is our message, too. We must announce this message to everyone on earth.

“God’s people must give His message about His saving mercy to everyone on earth. . . . This is the Third Angel’s Message. When we finish giving this message, then the whole earth will be filled with God’s glory.”—Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, volume 6, page 19, adapted.

THE LAMB THAT WAS KILLED (Revelation 5:6, 8, 12)

The book of Revelation uses many word pictures or symbols. We read about the dragon in heaven (Revelation 12:3, 4, 7). There are angels flying in the sky (Revelation 14:6). There is a woman who rides a red animal (Revelation 17:3). We read about these word pictures in the Bible. The Holy Spirit told John to include these word pictures in the Bible. These word pictures show us important Bible truth about the end times.

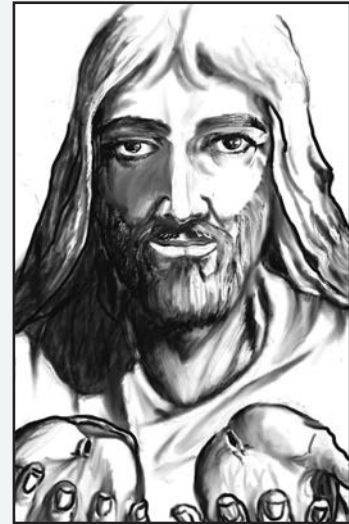
There is another word picture that we see often in the book of Revelation. What is this word picture? What does it show us?

Read Revelation 5:6, 8, 12; Revelation 7:17; Revelation 14:1; Revelation 15:3; Revelation 19:7; Revelation 21:22, 23; and Revelation 22:1, 3. What does the word picture of the Lamb mean? Why does this word picture appear so many times in the book of Revelation?

The first verse of the book of Revelation tells us what this book is about. This book shows us Jesus Christ. Jesus is the Lamb. He is not just any lamb. He is the Lamb who was killed (Revelation 5:6, 12; Revelation 13:8). The Lamb shows us our Savior who died on the cross for us. This Bible truth is the most important teaching of the Bible, the Three Angels' Messages, and the book of Revelation. We can't do the work God asks us to do if we don't make the Lamb the most important part of our message.

"Jesus is the Lamb who was killed for our sins. We must make this Bible truth the most important part of our teachings and of our work for God. We also must make this Bible truth the most important part of our sermons, articles, prayers, songs, Bible studies, and everything we do. Jesus showed His love for us on the cross. This love must change the way we behave. This love must make us more loving to other people. Then we will care for the people around us on this earth."—Ángel Manuel Rodríguez, "The Closing of the Cosmic Conflict: Role of the Three Angels' Messages" (from an unpublished paper), page 70, adapted.

We must make Jesus, the Lamb, the most important part of our message. How will talking about Jesus help us lead other people to accept the message? How will doing this help us?



Jesus is the Lamb. He is not just any Lamb. He is the Lamb who was killed (Revelation 5:6, 12; Revelation 13:8).



God's people will do miracles. They will heal the sick. God will show signs and wonders as proof.

ADDITIONAL THOUGHT: “God’s servants will go from place to place. Their faces will shine with light. They will announce God’s message from heaven. Thousands of people all over the earth will give the final warning. God’s people will do miracles. They will heal the sick. God will show signs and wonders as proof. This proof will help the people on the earth know that the work God’s people do is from Him. Satan also will do work. He will show wonders and miracles, too. People will see these works and think they are from God. But that is a lie. Satan will bring fire from heaven down to the earth. Revelation 13:13. Everyone on earth must choose the one they will believe and serve.

“God’s followers will convince people that their message is from God. But they will not win hearts with their reasons and smart words. The Holy Spirit Himself will convince people that the message is from heaven. God’s followers will help Him share His message. His followers will plant this message the same as a seed in people’s hearts. The message will grow in people’s hearts the same as a plant that grows fruit. Bible workers wrote about this Bible truth. Their small books did their job. Many people read about the message. But they didn’t understand everything they read at the time. So, they didn’t obey right away. Now these people understand Bible truth. They separate from everything that keeps them from being obedient to Bible truth. Their family members and church members can’t stop them from obeying God. Bible truth is more important to them than anything else. Many people try to stop these new believers from obeying God. But a large number of people accept Bible truth and join the Lord.”—Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, page 612, adapted.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- ① What is the connection between God’s saving mercy and the Three Angels’ Messages?
- ② Read Revelation 14:12 again. This verse talks about obedience. What is different between following the commandments and trying to earn God’s mercy with your own good behavior?
- ③ In class talk about things that are happening worldwide that you learn about on the news. What things have you seen happen that could help lead to final end-time happenings?

TRAINING BOYS TO READ THE BIBLE

What is the secret for teaching a child to spend personal time with God?

Christian Müller surprised me with his answer to this question. Christian is a dad who is from Argentina. He is a volunteer at a Seventh-day Adventist school in Tokmok, Kyrgyzstan. We talked in his house. I was in town to collect stories about Bible workers.

Each morning, Christian and his wife spent time with God. They studied the Bible and prayed. Christian said his 6-year-old son, Thomas, came to him during this personal worship time.

Christian said, "I would have told my son to wait until I was done. But he held up his Bible in his little hands and said, 'Papa, I don't understand what I'm reading. Can you help me?' What else could I do? He needed my help."

I told Christian that I was surprised that a boy so young read his Bible in the morning. My surprise grew when Christian explained that Thomas and his 7-year-old brother, Lukas, both read their Bibles every morning.

I asked, "How did you teach them to have morning worship?"

Christian answered, "I never taught them to have morning worship."

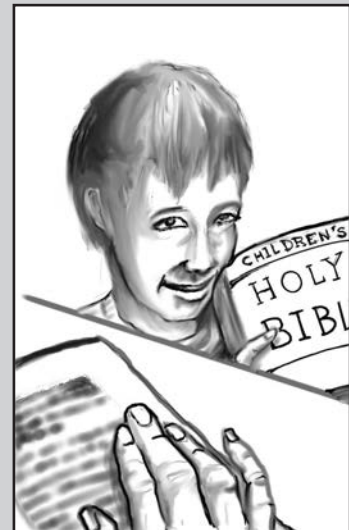
His boys started spending time with God every morning about the time when they first learned how to walk. Christian and his wife, Romina, sat every morning across from each other at the kitchen table. They read the Bible together in their home in Argentina. When the boys woke up in the mornings, they wanted to be with their parents in the kitchen. Christian told his boys that it was very important for Daddy and Mommy to spend time with God in the morning. If the boys wanted to stay in the kitchen during that time, they must be quiet and study the Bible, too. The boys chose to stay. At first, the boys were too young to read. So, they only looked at Bible picture books. As the boys grew older, they started to read their Bibles. Then Christian and his family moved to Kyrgyzstan. The parents and boys continued to spend time with God each morning on their own.

So, now I understood the secret for teaching a child to spend personal time with God each morning. Christian said, "I never told the boys that they needed to spend time with God. They just saw their mother and me spend time with God. So, our boys followed our example."

Thank you for your 13th Sabbath Offering in fourth quarter 2017 that helped improve the school where Christian worked as a volunteer in Tokmok, Kyrgyzstan. Thanks for your offering this Sabbath that will help share the Good News about Jesus. Read more about Thomas and Lukas online: bit.ly/mission-kids.

INSIDE *Story*

by ANDREW MCCHESENEY



'Papa, I don't understand what I'm reading. Can you help me?'

