

# ***The Book of Revelation***

## ***God's Everlasting Gospel***

Lesson #10 for March 9, 2019

Scriptures: Revelation 14:6-12; Matthew 24:14; Ecclesiastes 12:13-14; Exodus 20:2-11; Isaiah 21:9; 34:8-10.

1. We now turn to a very key chapter in the book of Revelation. To carry the messages of Revelation 14:6-12 to the entire world in the final generation is supposed to be the final work of Seventh-day Adventists. But, before we can do that and understand these three angels' messages, we must remind ourselves of Satan's claims and his activities as recorded in Revelation 13. God would not be responding as He does in Revelation 14:9-12 if the Devil had not first threatened death to anyone who remains loyal to God. (Revelation 13:15-17)
2. So, why are Satan's deceptions so successful? How can we protect ourselves against them? Remember that deceptions are lies. To deal with lies, one must know the truth. Do we know the truths of God's Word clearly enough so that we could not be deceived?
3. It is important to notice one detail. Contrary to what many people who have read the book of Revelation might think, the final choice will not be between worshiping God and not worshiping God. It will be a choice of *who* we worship—God or Satan. Those who worship Satan will receive the mark of the beast either on their forehead or on their hand; those who worship God and remain faithful to Him will receive the seal of God on their forehead.
4. So, what are people worshiping today? As you look around in the world, what do you see? Are they worshiping money? Fame? Power? Movies? Fashion? Music? These are things that Satan largely controls. What is most important in people's lives? How do they spend their time? That is what they worship. We need the fruit of the Spirit. (Galatians 5:22-23)
5. But, if we are to believe God's Word, a time will come when a marvelous effort will be sponsored by God in which God's faithful people will carry the three angels' messages to the entire world. While Satan is doing everything he possibly can to deceive humanity and lock them into his errors, God's faithful people will be spreading the truth of the three angels' messages and trying to convince people to join God's side. Do we understand it?
6. How do you think this great proclamation will actually happen? Has it started? Is it happening now? In some parts of the world, the spread of the gospel seems to be almost stagnant; in other unexpected places, it is growing like wildfire? Why do you think that is? Will the day come when the spread of the gospel will be like a wildfire worldwide? What could make that happen?

At infinite cost a way of salvation has been provided. Shall Christ's great sacrifice be in vain? Shall the earth be entirely controlled by satanic agencies? The salvation of souls is dependent upon the consecration and activity of the members of the church of God. The Lord calls upon those who believe in him to be workers together with him. While their life shall last, they are not to feel that their work is done. Until the time shall come when Christ shall say "It is finished," the work for the saving of souls will not decrease, but will grow in importance. **A thousand times more work for God might be accomplished if all his children would fully consecrate themselves to him. If they would improve every opportunity for doing good, doors for service would open before them. They would be called to bear greater responsibilities.**—Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*,\* November 23, 1905, par. 13. Compare PH164 - *Words of Encouragement to Workers in the Home Missionary Field* (1904)

16.3. [Bold type is added.]

7. As described in Revelation 14, three angels are flying in the midst of heaven with very important messages. While we do not have time now to look at all the evidence, there is powerful evidence to suggest that the actual messages are to be carried by God's faithful end-time people.
8. Do we understand clearly that the ones who are to proclaim these messages to the world are not "angels" but us? How can we best represent God in opposition to the messages of Satan and his counterfeits—Roman Catholicism and apostate Protestantism?
9. **The first angel's message:** Read Revelation 14:6-7 and Matthew 24:14. What is the significance of calling this passage the *everlasting* gospel?
10. The truth about God has always been the same. At this time in history, we are simply seeing truth carried to a final conclusion. God has always wanted to save everyone, even the Devil. (2 Peter 3:9) But, He knows that is not possible. He weeps as He sees so many turning away from Him. (Hosea 11:7-8)
11. Those who have carefully read their Bibles understand that God does not change and that His plan has been in place since before this world was created. (2 Timothy 1:9; Titus 1:2) We need to note that it is a message of judgment for those who refuse to listen to God, and it is a message of reward to those who faithfully worship Him. We are told these messages will be carried to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people. Those are the same groups that Satan is trying to influence. (Revelation 13:7,16) No one is going to be left out of the final battles in the great controversy.
12. Read Revelation 16:13-14. God's Trinity is being opposed by Satan's so-called trinity which includes: (1) Satan himself; (2) The sea beast signifying Roman Catholicism; and (3) The land beast, or false prophet, or lamblike beast representing apostate Protestantism. (Revelation 13) That evil trinity will clearly be active up through the sixth plague.
13. There are several terms that need to be understood before we can correctly understand the three angels' messages. The first term is the term *fear*. What does it mean to "fear God and give glory to Him"? (Revelation 14:7, *NKJV*\*) There are many passages throughout Scripture suggesting that the word *fear* only sometimes means terror; far more often it represents respect, reverence, and honor, even worship.  
**Job 1:8:** The LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, fearing God and turning away from evil."—*New American Standard Bible: 1995 update.*\* (1995). (Job 1:8). La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation.  
<sup>8</sup> "Did you notice my servant Job?" the LORD asked. "There is no one on earth as faithful and good as he is. He worships me and is careful not to do anything evil."—American Bible Society. (1992). *The Holy Bible: The Good News Translation*\* (2nd ed., Job 1:8). New York: American Bible Society.
14. For other references, see Revelation 11:18; 19:5; Deuteronomy 5:29; 11:13; Matthew 22:37; Ecclesiastes 12:13; Genesis 22:12; Psalm 111:10; Proverbs 3:7; 9:10; 16:6; Luke 7:16; Acts 2:43; 2 Corinthians 7:1; and 1 Peter 2:17-18.

In modern terms, the fear of God means to take God seriously enough to enter into a relationship with Him, to follow His warnings to avoid evil, and to do His commandments, even the ones that may be inconvenient—or worse. It is a call to live and act as those who know that they will give account to God one day.

According to this verse, such a serious calling will be a part of the experience of God's end-time people.—*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide\** 133.

15. So, what actually happens in this end-time judgment? What do we mean when we say, “The hour of His judgment has come”? (Revelation 14:7, *NKJV\**) Traditionally, of course, this has been understood to suggest that God is Judge of the world and will judge every single individual that has ever lived. But, the passage could also mean that **the time has come for God to be judged. (Romans 3:1-4)** In what sense could God be judged? Every person in the universe has cast or will cast his/her vote either for God or against God by joining God's side or by joining Satan's side. Thus, we judge God and Satan. And God's judgment will be final. (See 2 Corinthians 5:10; and Revelation 22:11-12.) So, judgment is also part of the good news. To those who choose God's side, it means vindication, salvation, freedom, and eternal life. Of course, that also means for those who choose against God—the disobedient the unrepentant—that it will be an end-time judgment-hour message. But, God does not want anyone to be lost.  
**2 Peter 3:9:** The Lord is not slow to do what he has promised, as some think. Instead, he is patient with you, because he does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants all to turn away from their sins.—*Good News Bible.\**
16. Thus, it is fair to say that at the end of time, the people of the world will fall into two different worship groups: (1) Those who fear and worship God and (2) Those who worship Satan and the beast. This is not talking about attending church and going through a set of ceremonies; this is about what one considers most important in his/her life.
17. Revelation 14:6-7 talk about an *everlasting gospel*. But, they also talk about *judgment*. How are the judgment and the gospel related? Read John 12:31-33; Revelation 5:5-10; **John 3:17-21; 5:22-25; 12:47-48**. There is nothing mysterious about God's judgment. God does not operate in secret or behind closed doors. His government is totally and completely transparent. Surrounding God's throne are 4 living creatures, 24 elders, and hundreds of millions of angels watching everything He does. You can be sure that they are all fully satisfied that everything God does is fair, righteous, and just. (See their testimony in Revelation 4&5.)
18. A careful reading of Scriptures makes it very clear that in the end, Satan and his allies and all his followers will be thrown into the lake of fire. (Revelation 19:20; 20:10,15)
19. This is an all-out battle over the minds and hearts of humankind. Read Exodus 20:2-11; compare Revelation 13. The first commandment tells us to worship God only; (Exodus 20:2; Deuteronomy 5:7) but, the beast demands that we worship him. (Revelation 13:7-8) The second commandment tells us not to set up any images; (Exodus 20:3-6; Deuteronomy 5:8-10) but, the beast sets up an image to himself to be worshiped. (Revelation 13:14-15) The third commandment tells us not to speak evil, especially of God; (Exodus 20:7; Deuteronomy 5:11) but, the beast and his allies speak blasphemy against God and His name. (Revelation 13:5-6) The fourth commandment tells us to worship God as our Creator and Redeemer by worshiping Him on the seventh-day Sabbath; (Exodus 20:8-11; Deuteronomy 5:12-15) but, the beast demands that we worship him on Sunday. Satan is doing everything he can to counterfeit, oppose, or replace God.
20. Do we honor and love God enough to want to keep His commandments? Or, is that a burden? Like Satan, do we want to do our own thing? And thus, do we worship at Satan's altar? Do we recognize the advantages of doing things God's way? Or, not? Do we want to live in a universe governed by love? Or, by selfishness leading to mutual-destruction?

21. It is important to notice that the expression “worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water” (NKJV\*) cannot fail to remind us of Exodus 20:11, the Sabbath commandment. Thus, we see that the first angel’s message is a clear call to worship our Creator and Friend.

While the observance of the false sabbath in compliance with the law of the state, contrary to the fourth commandment, will be an avowal of allegiance to a power that is in opposition to God, the keeping of the true Sabbath, in obedience to God’s law, is an evidence of loyalty to the Creator. While one class, by accepting the sign of submission to earthly powers, receive the mark of the beast, the other choosing the token of allegiance to divine authority, receive the seal of God.—Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy\** 605.2.

22. Do the people of the world have any idea about the great controversy and these choices? How are our views of creation and salvation related to each other? Why is it so important to worship on God’s Sabbath? God’s Sabbath is a time of love and service to others. Satan’s sabbath is a time for entertainment and self-pleasing.
23. **The second angel’s message:** The second angel’s message very clearly announces the fall, apostasy, and ultimate destruction of Babylon and its associates.

Babylon is said to be “the mother of harlots.” By her daughters must be symbolized churches that cling to her doctrines and traditions, and follow her example of sacrificing the truth and the approval of God, in order to form an unlawful alliance with the world.—Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy\** 382.2-383.0.

24. Read Revelation 14:8; 18:2; and Isaiah 21:9. Just as Nebuchadnezzar in ancient Babylon tried to force everyone to bow down and worship his golden statue, so modern-day Babylon will try to force God’s faithful people to worship Satan, the sea beast, and the land beast on Sunday. (See Revelation 13:11-18; 16:13; 17:5.)
25. But, only when “the union of the church with the world shall be fully accomplished throughout Christendom, will the fall of Babylon be complete.” —Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy\** 390.0.
26. In reading these passages about Babylon, we notice that she has a *wine*, the wine of her fornication. What does this wine symbolize? Revelation 17 pictures end-time Babylon as a harlot, making people on this earth drunk with her wine of immorality. (See Revelation 17:2.)

**Fornication.** A figure of the illicit connection between the church and the world or between the church and the state. The church should be married to her Lord, but when she seeks the support of the state, she leaves her lawful spouse. By her new connection she commits spiritual fornication. Compare on Eze. 16:15; James 4:4.—Nichol, F. D. (Ed.). (1980). *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary,\** vol. 7, 831. Review and Herald Publishing Association.

27. *The wine of Babylon* clearly refers to its false, deceptive teachings. If you have studied the history of the Protestant churches, you understand that many of them are gradually setting aside their opposition to the Roman Catholic Church. Ideas are creeping in such as theistic evolution, an obvious contradiction to creation. Theological traditions are replacing the idea of *the Bible and the Bible only* as our guide and counselor. What seems right to them at this point in time takes precedence over the Bible. New ideas are being adopted about gender, marriage, etc. We all know that intoxicated people cannot think clearly; so, what ideas do you see in the world around you which you think are examples of *the wine of Babylon*?

28. **The third angel's message:** Read Revelation 14:9-11. Reading the third angel's message can be very scary. It is the most fearsome language anywhere in Scripture. But, there are several things that we need to notice. In the third angel's message, we see God's response to Satan's deadly threats in Revelation 13:15-17. If we read these two passages superficially, we might think that no one will be left alive on planet earth. Satan is determined to kill all of God's faithful people, and God seems to be pouring out deadly anger and fury against everyone who joins Satan's side! But, some will survive. (Revelation 14:12) The wording clearly suggests that God's faithful people will have survived through Satan's end-time threats.
29. Do we understand all of the language of the third angel's message? Or, are we inclined to misrepresent God by how we explain the third angel's message? It is very easy to explain the third angel's message in a way that seems to confirm Satan's accusations against God that He is arbitrary, exacting, vengeful, unforgiving, and severe. We certainly do not want to do that!
30. What about *God's wrath* or *anger*? *God's wrath* is simply His turning away in loving disappointment from those who do not want Him anyway, thus leaving them to the inevitable and awful consequences of their own destructive choices. (See Hosea 4:17; 11:7-8; Romans 1:18,24,26,28.) For a much more complete explanation of God's wrath, see: [http://www.theox.org/images/uploads/bbk/KHart\\_BTGG\\_PDF\\_Gnrl\\_Gods\\_Wrath\\_or\\_Anger\\_16.pdf](http://www.theox.org/images/uploads/bbk/KHart_BTGG_PDF_Gnrl_Gods_Wrath_or_Anger_16.pdf) which is a handout in General Topics of "Teacher's Guides" on Theox.org.
31. Read again Revelation 14:10-11; 20:10-15; compare Isaiah 34:8-10; 66:24; and Jude 7. How are we to understand the words "and the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever"? (Revelation 14:11, *NKJV\**) The smoke is just the end result of the fire; the smoke is not living.
32. The expression *fire and brimstone* in the Bible clearly refers to total destruction. Look at the current status of Sodom and Gomorrah. Is it still burning? (Genesis 19:24; Isaiah 34:8-10) Isaiah spoke of the future—in his day—destruction of Edom by *fire and brimstone*. And how much of that kingdom is still left? Nothing at all.
33. So, what about you and your church? Are you ready to spread the three angels' messages to your community? This may seem like a daunting, perhaps, even impossible, task; but, it is our task.

The great work of the gospel is not to close with less manifestation of the power of God [the latter rain] than marked its opening [the former rain]. The prophecies which were fulfilled in the outpouring of the former rain at the opening of the gospel are again to be fulfilled in the latter rain at its close. Here are "the times of refreshing" to which the apostle Peter looked forward when he said: "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and He shall send Jesus." Acts 3:19, 20.

Servants of God, with their faces lighted up and shining with holy consecration, will hasten from place to place to proclaim the message from heaven. By thousands of voices, all over the earth, the warning will be given. Miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and signs and wonders will follow the believers. Satan also works, with lying wonders, even bringing down fire from heaven in the sight of men. Revelation 13:13. Thus the inhabitants of the earth will be brought to take their stand.

**The message will be carried not so much by argument as by the deep**

**conviction of the Spirit of God.** The arguments have been presented. The seed has been sown, and now it will spring up and bear fruit. The publications distributed by missionary workers have exerted their influence, yet many whose minds were impressed have been prevented from fully comprehending the truth or from yielding obedience. Now the rays of light penetrate everywhere, the truth is seen in its clearness, and the honest children of God sever the bands which have held them. Family connections, church relations, are powerless to stay them now. Truth is more precious than all besides. Notwithstanding the agencies combined against the truth, a large number take their stand upon the Lord's side.—Ellen G. White, *Great Controversy*\* 611.3-612.2. [Bold type and content in brackets are added.]

34. If we believe that we as Seventh-day Adventists are supposed to be spreading the message of the three angels to the entire world, are we practicing to get ready to do that? When was the last time you heard a sermon seriously discussing the three angels' messages? Are we fulfilling God's wish for us? Do we clearly understand the messages of the three angels? Can we explain them to others in a meaningful way? How is the Sabbath linked to these three messages? Could you explain the three angels' messages in a way that makes God look like a God of love?
35. Read Revelation 14:13-20. What do these verses have to do with the earlier messages recorded just before them? What we see is a harvest, in fact, two harvests. One is a harvest reaped by a scythe yielding a useful harvest of grain; the other is a harvest of grapes which are trampled in the winepress of *God's anger*.
36. We have not said much about Revelation 14:1-5. How are these verses related to Revelation 12:17? Could the remnant mentioned in Revelation 12:17 be the same as the 144,000 of Revelation 14:1-5? Or, perhaps include those people? When Revelation 14 is finished, chronologically, it will be almost time for the Lord to come.
37. So, what kind of worship is being discussed in Revelation 13 and 14? The word *worship* or one of its derivatives is found seven times in these two chapters. The worship of Satan is discussed in Revelation 13:4,8,12,15 and in Revelation 14:9,11. The faithful worship of God is taught in Revelation 14:6-7. Clearly, these verses focus on the core issue in the great controversy: Is God trustworthy? Is He worthy of worship? Or, would we be better off worshipping Satan? In what ways do Satan's followers worship him?
38. Why do you think that the idea of a judgment is unpopular among many Christians today? It is much easier to believe that once you make a statement that you accept Jesus Christ, then you are saved, and you do not have to do anything else. But, God cannot admit to heaven anyone who is not safe to have there. He cannot allow the great controversy to start all over again.
39. The difference between Sunday worshipers and Sabbath worshipers is not just 24 hours. The worship of God includes the belief that He is the Creator and that love is the very foundation of His government and that we will choose intentionally to do what is right because it is right. Sunday worshipers, while they probably would not admit this, will, in the end, choose to place their own ideas ahead of God's ideas; and thus, like Satan, will be worshipping self. Much of modern entertainment is just self-serving, even self-worship.
40. So, on which side do you want to be?

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