

WEEK OF PRAYER

MARCH 19 - 26 2022



I WILL
GO

THE PRESENT TRUTH:
GOD'S MESSAGE
FOR TODAY

General Conference | Gcyouthministries.org



New International Version (NIV)

Scripture quotations marked (NIV) are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc. TM Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide. www.zondervan.com

The “NIV” and “New International Version” are trademarks

Writer:

Yeury Ferreira

Project Coordinator:

Andrés J. Peralta

Advisors:

Abner De los Santos
Gary Blanchard
Pako Edson Mokgwane

Editor:

Kenia Reyes

Reviewed by:

Biblical Research Institute

Photos by: © Freepik

Cover & Interior Designer:

Had Graphic Inc. | Tel: 718-926-5468
hadgraphic@gmail.com



TABLE OF CONTENTS

About the Writer, 4
Greetings!, 5
Read this first, 6
Tips for Online Meetings, 7
Tips for Preaching Online, 8
How to Use this Book..., 9

SERMONS:

1. **Sabbath:** The Whole Truth in One Book, 11
2. **Sunday:** The Real Superhero, 17
3. **Monday:** True Star Wars, 23
4. **Tuesday:** Beauty and the Beast:
The True Story, 29
5. **Wednesday:** True and False Worship, 35
6. **Thursday:** The True Seal of God, 41
7. **Friday:** The Real Alien Invasion, 47
8. **Sabbath:** The True Gospel, 53



ABOUT THE WRITER:

Dr. S. Yeury Ferreira

Yeury Ferreira is an ordained pastor of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. He holds a master's degree in Leadership, Systematic Theology and Biblical Preaching. He also holds a PhD in Preaching from Andrews University. He has worked as a pastor, evangelist, and currently serves as the Hispanic Ministry Coordinator for the Greater New York Conference, and an adjunct professor at Andrews University. He is the author of several books, including *Living Without Fear*, book of the year for 2021 for the North American Division; as well as the book *Preach the Word: A Guide to Sermon Preparation and Preaching*, and *The Preacher and Preaching*. He is happily married to Mariel Ferreira and is father to Ernesto and Elizabeth Ferreira.

GREETINGS!

The purpose of each Week of Prayer we prepare here at the General Conference Youth Ministries department, is to encourage you to get to know our Heavenly Father on an even deeper level and living out a life that is pleasing to God. Our Global Youth Day was titled “Loving the Forgotten” and was centered on demonstrating how much we love and miss those we haven’t seen in a while. Jesus was a pure example of loving everyone around him, even those that maybe society or even the church had forgotten about and perhaps neglected. We are always so excited to see the wonderful projects you get done on GYD and we always pray that your love for service will continue even past this global event.

Now, for this Week of Prayer we have let the Holy Spirit lead us to bring to you messages that will help you understand a very important and crucial topic for our time: The Three Angels’ Messages. We know that it can seem like a very daunting and complex subject matter but as you will discover through these sermons, understanding these messages left to us in Revelation will allow your love for God to grow and help you understand your purpose even clearer. Who doesn’t like a clear path? I know we all do, and the beauty of the Bible is that God reveals everything to us right there in His word.

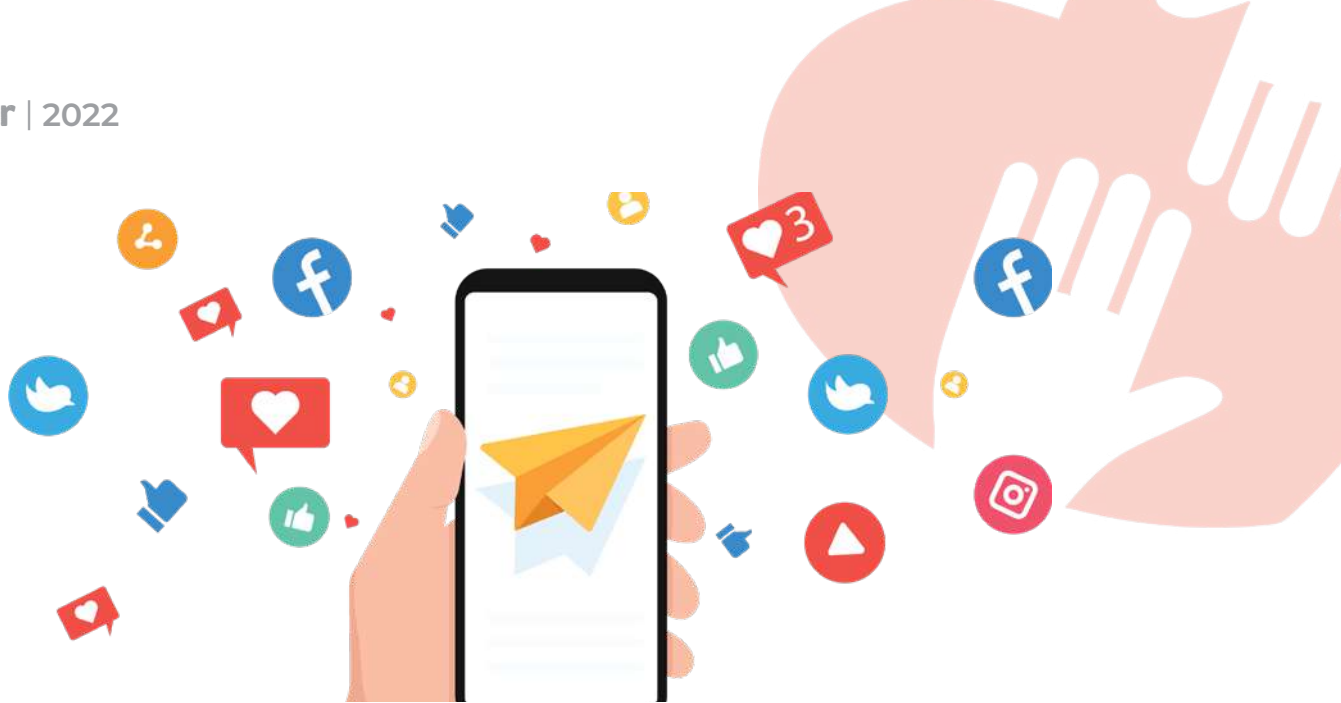
So please read these sermons carefully and prayerfully, keeping in mind that our main goal will always to be to love and honor our Father and share who He is with those around us, and loving everyone, especially those we might have forgotten.

General Conference Youth Ministries Team



READ THIS FIRST

- 1. Start Your Planning Now.** Start your planning, develop your target, get your team together, and make sure your pastor is a part of that team.
- 2. Global Youth Day Information.** Get information on the Global Youth Day project. This day will be the launch of the Youth Week of Prayer. Please visit our website, youth.adventist.org, or contact your local youth director to find out how you can participate.
- 3. Commit Your Prayer Warriors.** Get a team of adults together who will commit to praying for you and your ministry on a regular basis. Make sure this is a group with whom you can confidentially share both your personal and ministry prayer needs.
- 4. Choose a Theme Song.** Involve your youth choir. If your church does not have a youth choir, this is the perfect time to get one started. Pick out songs that you all like and which fit the topic of each evening or choose a song for the entire week.
- 5. Form a Week of Prayer Development/Review Team.** Depending on the size of your church, this group can be four to eight persons who will go through all eight readings with you. Include on your team only interested and committed young adults and youth ministry leaders (Pathfinder, Sabbath School, etc., your pastor/s); this is important because it gives ownership to the entire group, rather than just you and your assistant. Ask the group to commit to meeting for at least three weeks—at least one week for four lessons, and an extra week to wrap things up. Be sure to identify the goal and direction you want to go, preferably at the first meeting, and choose a young person to speak for each day.
- 6. Integrate Global Youth Day (GYD) into Your Week of Prayer Plans.** Ideally, GYD should be a time to teach youth how to sacrificially give of themselves by providing opportunities in the church and the community. If you are a small youth group and do not have the resources to arrange a community-based GYD event, you can use this opportunity to break down denominational barriers in the area by partnering with and pooling resources and ideas with other youth groups from other churches in your area.



TIPS FOR ONLINE MEETINGS

KEEP IT SIMPLE

It's always best to keep your setup simple to lower the possibilities of technical errors.

HAVE BACKUP EQUIPMENT READY TO GO

Even with a simple setup, there is still a chance your equipment may fail. It's always best to play it safe and keep backups of your needed equipment if possible. Make sure everything is charged or connected.

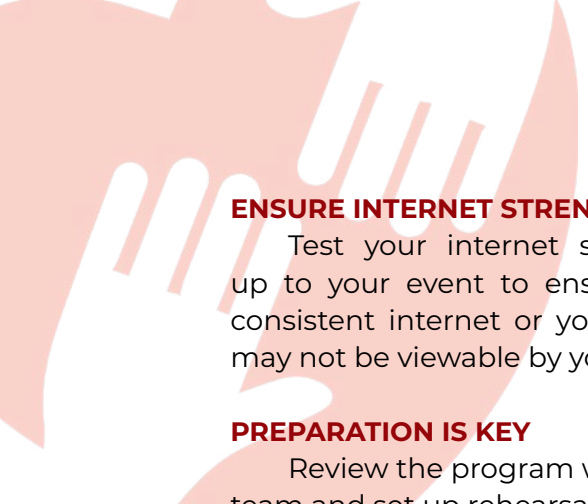
LIGHTING, LIGHTING, LIGHTING!

Check your lighting ahead of time to make sure it's ideal and avoid backlighting your subject. If you're filming outside, be mindful of the sun.

Glare from the sun can prevent your video from being seen.

ENHANCE SOUND QUALITY AND MINIMIZE BACKGROUND NOISE

A lapel mic or even the typical headphone-mic combo can achieve this. If it's windy, find some sort of cover to block the wind. Don't forget to find a quiet room for your livestream set up. BE CAREFUL WITH HOT MICS! Always make sure your microphone is on when you need it and off when you're not the speaker.



ENSURE INTERNET STRENGTH

Test your internet speed leading up to your event to ensure you have consistent internet or your live stream may not be viewable by your audience.

PREPARATION IS KEY

Review the program with your team and set up rehearsals. This will help lessen any last-minute mistakes. Too much is happening too quickly in a live environment; you can think more clearly about what needs to be done days in advance.

MONITOR YOUR STREAM ON AN EXTRA DISPLAY

Monitoring is important so you can ensure a reliable and professional live stream. An extra display provides valuable perspective by letting you see your live show through the eyes of your viewers.

LOOK AT THE CAMERA – NOT THE MONITOR!

Resist the urge to stare at the monitor! Try your best to keep your eyes looking at the camera. This will also help your viewers feel engaged.

RESPOND TO COMMENTS LIVE (IF POSSIBLE)

Interacting with your viewers in this way helps boost engagement with your audience and keeps them coming back for more.



TIPS FOR PREACHING ONLINE

- ✓ **PREACH SHORTER**
- ✓ **PREACH UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL**
- ✓ **EYE CONTACT MATTERS**
- ✓ **BE YOURSELF**
- ✓ **UP YOUR ENERGY!**
- ✓ **PREACH THE WORD**
- ✓ **USE ILLUSTRATIONS**
- ✓ **GREET YOUR AUDIENCE**
- ✓ **INTERACT WITH YOUR AUDIENCE**
- ✓ **BE RELEVANT**
- ✓ **ENCOURAGE YOUR CONGREGATION TO SHARE YOUR SERMONS AND APPRECIATE THE TRUST THEY PLACE IN YOU BY SHARING IT.**
- ✓ **REMEMBER TO PRAY!**

A top-down photograph of several hands of different skin tones stacked in a circle on a green grassy surface. The hands are positioned with fingers pointing towards the center, creating a sense of unity and teamwork. The background is a dense field of green grass with some small white flowers.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK WITH A SMALL OR LARGE GROUP



1. Journal Space. This book is designed to be filled with your thoughts. Use the space provided to record your reactions to the something you may hear in the sermon and the questions at the end of each day. It can also be used to write a prayer request or praise to God. Encourage participants to use it anyway they want. It's their journal! Tell them there are no rules, just guidelines. The important thing is to listen to the Lord and open their heart in response to His leading. Leaders, if you take the time to read the daily readings prayerfully and with the anticipation that God will reveal new things to you, you will be surprised at what will flow through your pen or pencil onto the pages of these journals.

2. Start a Prayer Journal. Nothing is greater for your personal spiritual growth than time spent in prayer. Your youth group will grow as you grow. Prayer journaling will help you encounter God in new and exciting ways. You will be able to “track” your walk with God as you go back, and review answered prayers and see how He has led you step by step each day. New, fresh ideas will come to mind as you spend time in His presence journaling your prayers. You can find many ideas online on starting and keeping a prayer journal. Just go to www.google.com and type in the words “starting a prayer journal.”

3. Daily Questions. Included with each sermon are questions designed to get you thinking. Form small groups and discuss these questions. Take a moment to really think about the point the question is trying to get across. Listen to the Holy Spirit as He teaches you through Scripture. Encourage participants to record their thoughts in their journal.

4. Global Youth Day is set to launch the official week of the Youth Week of Prayer meetings. The theme for 2021 is REACHING OUT. Ahead of time, please contact your pastor or conference youth leader to see what projects your church will be involved in on this day, March 20. If you are planning a full day event, the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) has an amazing activity, *In Their Shoes*, that can be done during your afternoon AY program.

In Their Shoes is an interactive poverty experience that takes teens on a 24-hour journey into the lives of teens from other countries around the world. Through the eyes of this new identity, they will begin to understand the challenges that millions of people in developing countries face every day. You'll discover what ADRA is doing to help and what the Bible has to say about living a life of Christian service.

SERMON 1

The Whole Truth in One Book

(2 Timothy 3:16-17)

INTRODUCTION

L*upin* was one of the most watched TV series in 2021. Its plot tells the story of Assane Diop, the son of an immigrant from Senegal who had come to France to seek a better life, but his father, Babakar, is framed in the theft of an expensive diamond necklace by his employer, the rich and powerful Hubert Pellegrini. Assane Diop's father is captured by the police and sent to prison, so, embarrassed, he decides to take his own life in his cell, leaving the teenager Assane an orphan. Twenty-five years later and inspired by the book *Arsène Lupin* that his father had given him on his birthday – about the life



of a thief knight– Assane decides to take revenge on the Pellegrini family, using his charisma and everything he has learned through this book.

Assane Diop does things that seem impossible, but thanks to good contacts, cutting-edge technology, and subtle traps, he almost always gets away with it; even if he is wrong, he has an ace up his sleeve to get out of complicated situations. But none of these strategies are entirely his, as they were all learned from Arsen Lupin's adventure book.

In short: *Lupin* is the story of a young man whose life is impacted by reading a book! And let me tell you that it is not an exceptional case, there are books that really have that power!

Dear young man and young woman, in this first message I would like to show you a book that has the power to change your lives. Do you know which book I'm referring to? The Bible: the most important book in history. The one that is above all other books and the one that contains the whole truth.

In this series of messages, we will be studying the present truth or, rather, the truth for the time in which we are living. However, I think it is important, first of all, to lay the foundations that will serve as a platform for each of the messages that we will be presenting during this week. Therefore, we must answer two important questions in relation to the Bible:

First, what evidence do we have to believe that the Bible is unique as the inspired Word of God?

Second: As young people, what benefits can we gain from reading and studying the Bible?

DEVELOPMENT

Let's begin by answering the first question: *What evidence do we have to*

believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God? There are at least four pieces of evidence that testify that the Bible is the Word of God.

EVIDENCE #1: WONDERFUL UNITY

The Bible is a collection of books, written by 40 authors who lived in a period spanning approximately 1,500 years. These people came from different countries and many of them did not know each other.

Just think of the fact that the writers of the Bible came from all kinds of backgrounds; for example, *Moses* was a political leader and judge, educated in the universities of Egypt; *David* was king, poet, musician, shepherd, and warrior; *Amos* was an animal herder; *Joshua* a military general; *Nehemiah* a cupbearer for a pagan king; *Daniel*, a Prime Minister; *Solomon* was king and philosopher; *Luke*, physician, and historian; and *Paul*, a rabbi.

But the writers of the Bible not only came from different backgrounds and places, they also wrote in different contexts: *Moses* wrote while in the wilderness; *Jeremiah*, in prison; *Daniel*, in a palace; *Luke*, while traveling; *John*, banished on the island of Patmos.

Likewise, the Bible is written in different styles and in three different

languages and, despite everything, it presents a wonderful unity. We can see that:

- The Bible has one theme: salvation.
- The Bible has a hero: the Lord Jesus Christ.
- The Bible has an evil one: the devil.
- The Bible has a purpose: Revealing the truth about life and God's character!

EVIDENCE #2: MIRACULOUS SURVIVAL

The Bible has been the most hated, persecuted, and attacked book in history; no other book has received more attacks than the Bible! It has been attacked by emperors, philosophers, scientists and even by believers themselves; and as we can see today, despite all the attacks, the Bible remains. Let me give you an example:

The famous French unbeliever Voltaire, who died in 1778, declared that one hundred years after his death Christianity and its Bible would disappear. And what do you think happened? Just 50 years after his death, his press and his home in Geneva were being used to produce piles of Bibles.

The enemies of the Bible come and go, but the Bible remains. Jesus was right when He said, *"Heaven and earth*

will pass away, but my words will never pass away" (Mark 13:31).

EVIDENCE #3: HISTORICAL ACCURACY

It is said that the English archaeologist and historian William Mitchell Ramsay (1851-1939), an atheist and son of atheists, set out to prove that the Bible was not a trustworthy document and that all the historical claims he made were false.

So, he turned to the two books of Luke: The Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles, since in these books of the Bible many places, proper names and dates are mentioned, which can be easily corroborated or denied by secular historical sources.

To achieve his goal, Ramsay personally toured the biblical lands and devoted himself to research for twenty-five years. It was surprising for him to see – through archaeological excavations – that 32 countries, 54 cities and 9 islands mentioned by Luke in his second book were real places.

Instead of proving the Bible false, Ramsay found dozens of reliable proofs that confirmed its historical veracity. The world was astonished when William Ramsay converted to Christianity and, moreover, a defender of biblical truth.

Young people, the Bible is not fiction, it is historical reality!

EVIDENCE #4: THE FULFILLMENT OF PROPHECIES

Additional evidence testifying that the Bible is the inspired Word of God consists in the exact fulfillment of its prophecies. The Bible is the only religious book that contains prophecies that have been fulfilled exactly in history; the Old Testament alone contains more than 2,000 prophecies that have been fulfilled.

I could give you many examples of fulfilled prophecies but let me show you only those related to the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. Scholars say that Jesus fulfilled more than 300 Old Testament prophecies. Of Jesus Christ was prophesied:

- The years of his ministry and death (Daniel 9:25-27).
- The place of his birth (Micah 5:2).
- His miraculous birth (Isaiah 7:14).
- The star that would announce his appearance (Numbers 24:17).
- The betrayal of which he would be a victim (Zechariah 11:12).
- His death and burial (Isaiah 53:9-12).
- His resurrection (Psalm 16:9-11).

Each of these Bible prophecies and many, many more have been fulfilled, and we are sure that those that remain to be fulfilled will be fulfilled. Praise be to the name of our God! The fulfillment of prophecies is evidence that the Bible is the inspired Word of God.

Since we have enough evidence to show that the Bible is the inspired Word of God, let's answer our second question: *What benefits does Bible reading bring to us as young people?* There are many benefits that will come into your lives through reading and studying the Bible, but today, with this message, I only wish to present three of them to you:

BENEFIT #1: READING THE BIBLE ALLOWS YOU TO KNOW GOD

Knowing about God is not the same as knowing God. In order to know someone, you need to dedicate time to them, emulate their behavior and live with them; God can be known through the Bible. By reading the Bible you will be able to have reference to his Person, his character, his justice, his mercy and his love. *"Now this is eternal life," Jesus said, "that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent"* (John 17:3).

BENEFIT #2: READING THE BIBLE GIVES YOU WISDOM

Watching a lot of morning news as you get ready to go to work or school, filling up on app notifications, or watching health shows doesn't make you wise, it just gives you the basics you should know; it's just general culture. It doesn't matter how many books you've read about science, literature, philosophy, or law; that won't make you wise. Wisdom does not come from the human intellect!

Instead, the Bible shows us how to find wisdom, apply it, and enjoy it. It comes from the knowledge of God, from reverence for Him and His Word; it is a fruit of the search for His Presence. The Bible is clear, precise, and gives us wisdom for daily living. Notice what the following two verses say:

- *The unfolding of your worlds gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.* (Psalm 119:130).
- *For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.* (Proverbs 2:6).

BENEFIT #3: READING THE BIBLE LEADS YOU AWAY FROM SIN AND TO AN ABUNDANT LIFE

Saturating ourselves with the Word of God and understanding our dependence

on Jesus Christ will allow there to be less opportunity for the exercise of sin in our hearts and in our lives. Reading the Bible will make us dissatisfied with what we know and will make us go further to know the redemptive work of Jesus and His grace, thus resisting all kinds of temptation.

Notice what the following verses say to you: *How can a young person stay on the path of purity? By living according to your word. I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.* (Psalm 119:9, 11).

Jesus said, I have come that they [and you!] may have life, and have it to the full! (John 10:10).

CONCLUSION

Dear young people, *the Bible is the inspired Word of God that has the power to change your lives.* Some time ago I had the opportunity to listen to the story of Juan Briceño. From a young age he thought that humans could live without God, so with this thought in mind John lived as he wanted; at first glance everything was fine: he worked, had fun, and always enjoyed life, but inwardly he felt an emptiness.

In his attempt to fill this hole he turned to drugs. Juan expressed that he

immersed himself so much in the world of drugs that had him enslaved 14 years. And not only did he consume them, but he even went so far as to distribute them as well. What a pity!

John's relatives lost all hope of change. They had done everything humanly possible to help him, but unfortunately it was all in vain.

One day John attended a friend's birthday party and saw a group of well-dressed young men whose behavior and talking points were very different from other boys his age. After a while, John realized it was a group of Adventist youth.

Then and with dissimulation, John approached them with some fear, thinking that they were going to reject him; but to his surprise those young people received him with love. They talked to him, prayed, and at the end of the meeting gave him a Bible.

"I had never had a Bible in my hands," John said, "but that day, when I left the birthday party, I began to read God's Word. Then, from that day on, my life began to change."

It's been 13 years since that night John began reading the Bible. Today, John is not a man tied to drugs but a free man, who lives happily with his wife and children. God's Word performed the

miracle in his life and transformed him! Praise be to the name of the Lord!

Young people, I invite you to study your Bible daily. Set aside a regular time of day to hear God's voice. I assure you that if you make this a habit, your life will never be the same. And please never forget that: *All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.* (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

REFLECTION AND STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What evidence do we have that testifies that the Bible is the inspired Word of God?
2. How many prophecies did our Lord Jesus Christ fulfill in His life and ministry?
3. What did William Mitchell Ramsay discover regarding the historical accuracy of the Bible?
4. What benefits do we, as young people, gain from reading and studying the Bible?
5. What does 2 Timothy 3:16-17 teach us?

SERMON 2

The Real Superhero

(Revelation 1:1)

INTRODUCTION

I don't know about you, but I've always been struck by superhero stories. Those who possess superpowers and who are the only ones capable of saving the planet and, sometimes, the universe! Superheroes capture our attention and admiration: we've read their stories, watched their movies, and bought their video games. Who hasn't been amazed by the actions of Superman, Iron Man, Batman, Spiderman, Wonder Woman, Black Panther and Captain America?

According to DC Comics and Marvel Universe, these characters are in charge of taking care of the enemy



forces that threaten to destroy us. They are not afraid of anything, or anyone and with their superpowers they can perform unimaginable feats. Their stories are so shocking that in 2014 a DC Comics magazine, which first featured Superman, sold through eBay for no less than \$3,207,852!¹

Although these superheroes captivate our attention, we know that they

¹ <https://www.europapress.es/cultura/libros-00132/noticia-10-comics-mas-caros-historia-20160326102823.html>

are the product of the imagination of their creators. They are not real! They exist only in our imagination and on our screens!

However, there is a real superhero, who is not a figment of the imagination. This superhero has the superpower of being the only one capable of bringing peace to the disturbed heart, comfort to the anguished soul, hope to those who have had enough of crying and salvation to the lost. Do you want to know the name of such a powerful superhero? *His name is Jesus: the true superhero of history.*

DEVELOPMENT

I. As you read the Bible, you will realize that each of its stories as well as each of its teachings are intended to show us the person, character, and power of Jesus Christ. The superhero of the Bible is Jesus!

Of all the books of the Bible, the one that speaks most about our superhero is the last book: Revelation. The book of Revelation was written around A.D. 96 by John. Do you know who John is? Do you remember?

John was one of the twelve disciples who, being only a young man, was called by Jesus (Matthew 4:21) and without a

second thought responded positively to his invitation. As a result, his life was transformed.

Before his call he was called the “son of thunder” (Mark 3:17). After his encounter with Jesus he became known as the “beloved disciple” (John 21:20-24). What an impressive and wonderful transformation! Did you know that Jesus wants to do the same with you? If you accept Him today as your Savior, your life will never be the same again!

John, the “beloved disciple,” wrote five books of the New Testament: The Gospel of John, Letters 1, 2, 3, and Revelation. But you know? Many young people only like to read the Gospel of John and not Revelation!

I’ve heard some young people say, “Revelation is a difficult book to understand. It’s full of symbolism, mysterious numbers, secret codes, and hidden keys.” Others have confessed to me that they don’t like Revelation because it looks like a horror movie, where they talk about wild beasts, dragons, death, plagues, disease, pain, and destruction.

But would this be true? Is Revelation a book of terror and hidden mysteries? Revelation is not a book of terror; quite the opposite: Revelation is a full-color

portrait of Jesus Christ, emphasizing the triumph of God's love! So that you can see what I am telling you is true, let me read only the first few verses of this wonderful book:

The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, who testifies to everything he saw—that is, the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near. (Revelation 1:1-3).

Did you notice well? The book of Revelation is the *revelation of Jesus Christ*. The English word revelation is the translation of the Greek word *apokalypsis* and literally means to *unveil* or discover. Have you ever seen a work of art unveiled? It is an important occasion in which someone pulls a cord and, for the first time, the work of art is publicly seen as the artist intended. That's exactly what the word Revelation means! It is to remove the veil so that the image of Jesus Christ may appear in all His splendor and glory!

It is for this reason that in each one of the 22 chapters of Revelation, Jesus Christ is the protagonist, who appears adopting different names and exercising

different functions. Our superhero is mentioned with more than 38 different names and descriptive titles; in the first three chapters alone, he is mentioned in various ways 137 times, and throughout the book there are about 250 references to his great person.

We find our superhero being:

- The First and the Last (Revelation 1:17).
- The Son of God (Revelation 2:18).
- The Holy and True (Revelation 3:7).
- The Lion of the tribe of Judah (Revelation 5:5).
- The Word of God (Revelation 19:13).
- The King of kings and Lord of lords (Revelation 19:16).
- The Alpha and the Omega (Revelation 22:13).

II. What are the superpowers that Revelation highlights of Jesus Christ? There are many!, but let me introduce you to only three of them. Let's start by talking about our *superhero being God the Creator*. In Revelation 3:14 we are told that Jesus is "The Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of *God's creation*."

Jesus is the *beginning* of creation. Does this mean he is a created being? No

way! The word “beginning,” used in this verse, comes to us from the Greek word *archē*, which means originator or ruler. Our superhero is the creator, originator and supreme ruler of creation! Let’s look at what John himself wrote regarding the divinity of Jesus:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made (John 1:1-3).

Since we know that our superhero is the creator, *let’s talk about some of his attributes.* Did you know that of all the names and titles that our Jesus adopted in the book of Revelation there is one that is his favorite?

Oddly enough, it is the name *Lamb*. Revelation uses that name 28 times to refer to Jesus! It is a bit strange to us that this is the name that Revelation uses most to tell us about Jesus, since the image of a lamb brings to our mind fragility and vulnerability.

I’ve never heard of a basketball or baseball or soccer team using a lamb as its symbol! We hear about the Bulls or the Timberwolves, but I’ve never heard of a team called “The Lambs of New York”! Can we imagine how the fans would

feel? No one would be a fan of a team with this name!

But it is important that we understand that God works very differently than we human beings do. While in popular culture the image of a lamb is a symbol of weakness, in the Bible it is a symbol of power and victory.

For example, in revelation chapter 5, the Lamb is described as follows:

And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. (v. 6).

In this verse we see the lamb as having *seven horns* and *seven eyes*. Maybe we’re a little confused and wondering: What does this mean? It is of the utmost importance that we understand that Revelation was written using symbols and to understand the symbols it is necessary to compare them with the rest of the Bible.

The horns in biblical prophetic language represent *power, strength, honor,* and *exaltation* (Deuteronomy 33:17; Numbers 23:22); likewise, the eyes are a symbol of knowledge and *wisdom* (Psalm 34:15; 1 Peter 3:12). On the other hand, in the Bible the number 7 is a

symbol of *perfection*. So the image of the seven *horns represents* perfect power (*omnipotence*). For its part, the image of the seven eyes refers to perfect knowledge (*omniscience*).

Praise be to the name of God! Our superhero can do anything and knows everything! His power and knowledge are perfect! In him there is no weakness or defeat! He is eternal and almighty!

Finally, Revelation tells us that our superhero *is powerful to save*. Revelation chapter 5, verses 9 and 10 state of the Lamb:

"You are worthy to take the scroll,
And to open its seals;
For You were slain,
And have redeemed us to God by Your blood
Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,
And have made us kings and priests to our God;
And we shall reign on the earth."

Jesus was sacrificed for you and me, and because of His sacrifice we have been freed from condemnation and eternal death (Romans 8:1). Our superhero is the *faithful witness*, the *firstborn of the dead* and the sovereign of the *kings of the earth*. *He who loves us has washed us of our sins with his blood* and made us kings and priests for God,

his Father, be the glory and kingdom forever and ever (Revelation 1:5-6).

CONCLUSION

John Franco needed a superhero to come to his rescue. As a child he lost his parents in a terrible accident; because of this tragedy he had to live with his grandparents, but at the age of 17 he left home and traveled to Brooklyn County, New York.

While there he became a member of a gang and at just 20 years old, he was sentenced to two years in prison for armed robbery. While in prison he fell into a deep depression.

At age 22 he received parole, but the use of drugs, alcohol, and his constant relapses into the labyrinth of depression led him to be admitted to a treatment and mental health center. When he left this center, he had nowhere to go, so he ended up being a vagabond in New York.

He was constantly seen lying in the street, a victim of overdoses. John desperately needed someone to help him out of the deep pit he was in! He needed the help of a superhero to help him overcome his addiction!

One day while walking down the street he found a flyer announcing the

start of a week of evangelistic lectures, titled “*Revelations of the Apocalypse*.” He saw the address and decided to attend.

When he arrived at the church, he heard the preacher say that Jesus is the only one who has the power to give freedom and before the preacher finished his message John’s face was bathed in tears. At that moment he asked God to work a miracle in his life.

In a powerful way God worked in his heart! Jesus, the divine superhero, came to his rescue and gave him the strength to deal with all his addictions! Today John Franco is an addiction-free youth and active member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Dear young man and miss, *Jesus is the true superhero of all history*. That is why today I wish to extend an invitation to you to accept Him into your lives.

- If you feel *lost*, Jesus, your superhero, is your *Savior*!
- If you feel *weak*, Jesus, your superhero, is all-*powerful*!
- If *you’re confused* and don’t know which way to go, Jesus, your superhero, knows *everything*!
- If you feel *defeated and hopeless*, Jesus, your superhero, is God the *Creator*!

- Come here! Come here! Surrender your life to the true superhero of history: *Jesus Christ*!

REFLECTION AND STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Who wrote the book of Revelation?
2. What does the word “Revelation” mean?
3. How many names does Jesus adopt in Revelation?
4. What does it mean for the lamb to have “seven horns” and “seven eyes”?
5. According to Revelation 1:5-6, what has our superhero done for each of us?

SERMON 3

True Star Wars

(Revelation 12:7-8)

INTRODUCTION

“A long time ago in a galaxy very far away...” Sound familiar to you? Thus, begins *Star Wars*, one of the most successful film series in history. Its creator was George Lucas, who in the seventies produced the first of a series of nine films that have captured the attention of millions of people.

The plot of *Star Wars* can be summarized as follows: in a galaxy far away a long and bloody confrontation takes place between the Jedi, who advocate for order and justice in the Galactic Republic, with Luke Skywalker being the most famous of all. And the Sith, a sect of beings who use the dark side of

force in their attempt to seize galactic dominance, led by Darth Vader, a bright young knight who changed his career as a guardian of justice and truth to establish his cruel galactic empire; from his headquarters on the Death Star Darth Vader plans to destroy everything good in the universe, but the benign forces manage to destroy their plans, then peace returns once again to the universe as good triumphs over evil.

Millions of people have been fascinated by this story! Although the film’s script is spectacular, we all know that



such *Star Wars* only exists in the vivid imagination of George Lucas.

Now, what if I told you that there is a real *Star Wars*, would you believe me? Thousands of years before George Lucas created *Star Wars*, John, the “beloved disciple” and writer of Revelation had already written about a true *Star Wars*. In this war the fate of every person is at stake.

This real *Star Wars* is known as *The Conflict of the Ages* or *The Great Controversy*. Revelation presents us in full color and with special effects this cosmic conflict:

And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. (Revelation 12:7-9).

So let’s study this real *Star Wars* drama. To do this we are going to divide our study into three parts: **First:** we will present its main actors. **Second:** we will take a tour of its different episodes. **Third,** we will consider its outcome.

DEVELOPMENT

I. *First, let’s study who are the main actors in the real Star Wars.*

The main actors in this *Star Wars* are Michael and the Dragon. And who are they? What role do they play? Let’s start by identifying Michael. This character appears about five times in the Bible. In Daniel, chapter 10:12-13; 21, we can see him fighting on behalf of the prophet. In Jude 1:9 we see him contending with Satan for the body of Moses. Likewise, Daniel 12:1 says that in the time of the end Michael will arise to deliver God’s elect.

There are two keys that allow us to identify Michael; the first: its name comes to us from the Hebrew *Mikha’el*, whose meaning is “*Who is like God?*” The second key: according to Jude 1:9, Michael is the “archangel” and, according to Daniel, the “chief of the princes” (Daniel 10:13, 21). With these two keys we can come to the conclusion that Michael is Jesus Christ. Jesus is equal to God (John 1:1-3) and is called an archangel (1 Thessalonians 4:16).

Being clear about who Michael is, let’s identify the Dragon. Revelation 12:9 says that the Dragon is the “*ancient serpent*,” which is called the *devil* and

Satan". Notice then that the Dragon is Satan, God's archenemy.

On the other hand, whenever I present this topic there is a question that comes up: Who created Satan? What is its origin? Isaiah 14:12-14 and Ezekiel 28:11-19 reveal that God created a perfect being named *Lucifer*, a name meaning "the Light Bearer." He was "the seal of perfection, full of wisdom, and of finished beauty" (Ezekiel 28:12), but one day he stopped beholding God to contemplate himself; as a result, he was filled with "iniquity" and "sin" (Ezekiel 28:16).

That being who was once the bearer of light of his own free will became Satan, God's adversary, and the author of evil. We conclude that Jesus, the prince of life, and Satan, the originator of sin, are the main characters in the real Star Wars.

II. Secondly, let's look at the different episodes of the real Star Wars.

The first episode took place in heaven itself and we call it *the rebellion*. Revelation 12:7 says that *there was a great war in heaven*. Now, it is important that we understand that this was not a physical war. The word "war", used by John, comes from the Greek term *polemos*, from which the well-known

word *polemic* comes. This war began as a war of ideas and arguments. Satan, who is the father of lies, sought by all means to tarnish the character of God; his purpose was to rise up and usurp God's place (Isaiah 14:12-14). Satan said that God was a tyrant and all He wanted was to keep his creatures in subjection. The famous Christian writer Ellen White, commenting on this first episode, wrote:

Lucifer, the covering cherub, desired to be first in heaven. He sought to gain control of heavenly beings, to draw them away from their Creator, and to win their homage to himself. Therefore, he misrepresented God, attributing to Him the desire for self-exaltation. With his own evil characteristics, he sought to invest the loving Creator. Thus, he deceived angels.¹

In this first episode, Satan was defeated and expelled from heaven along with one third of the angels who chose to follow him. Michael got the victory!

The second episode is the *invasion*. What happened after Satan's expulsion? God brought about the wonderful creation. Genesis, chapter 1, says that the Lord created all things in six days and that on the sixth day He carried out the creation of man: "So God created man in his own

¹ Ellen White. *The Desire of Ages*, Mountain View, CA; Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1898, p. 21.3.

image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.” (Genesis 1:27).

God placed our first parents in a paradise known as *Eden* and gave them a command that said, “*And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”* (Genesis 2:16-17 NKJV).

It was then that Satan invaded the harmony of Eden.

Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, “Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?’” And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.’” Then the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” (Genesis 3:1-5 NKJV).

Sadly, our first parents disobeyed the Lord and as a result became slaves of Satan. You may be wondering: Why did God allow this trial? Why didn't he

keep Satan away from Adam and Eve? It is good for us to understand that God is a God of freedom. He didn't simply create robots to control them from a distance. Adam and Eve had free will; they could choose between obeying God or disobeying Him: sadly, they chose the path of disobedience.

The third episode of true Star Wars is *conquest*. Satan thought he had destroyed God's purposes; however, before the foundation of the world a plan of conquest had been designed (Revelation 13:8). After the fall, God promised a deliverer who would end the reign of evil. “*And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*” (Genesis 3:15).

This liberator would be none other than Michael. Our Lord Jesus would take the place of fallen man and confront Satan and his demonic hosts. And so it was! Michael, the great incarnate prince (Matthew 1:18) who with his death paid the ransom price (Ephesians 1:7), but did not remain in the tomb, but on the third day rose again and conquered the empire of death (Hebrews 2:14).

With His birth, life, death, and resurrection, Jesus was crowned the victor in the true Star Wars. Thanks to his victory

the whole universe obtained triumph over Satan: *“Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.”* (Revelation 12:10).

III. *Thanks to the victory obtained by Jesus we know what the outcome of the true Star Wars will be*

There is no doubt that the evil empire will be destroyed forever! Revelation 20: 10 says that the devil *“will be cast into the lake of fire.”* His destruction will be final!

Ellen White, in poetic words, presents the end of the real Star Wars:

The great controversy is ended. Sin and sinners are no more. The entire universe is clean. One pulse of harmony and gladness beats through the vast creation. From Him who created all, flow life and light and gladness, throughout the realms of illimitable space. From the minutest atom to the greatest world, all things, animate and inanimate, in their unshadowed beauty and perfect joy, declare that God is love.²

² Ellen White. *The Great Controversy*, Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1911, pp. 678.3.

CONCLUSION

What is the central truth of true Star Wars? Jesus *is the great overcomer!* His conquest surpasses even the imaginary exploits of the Jedi or Skywalker! His victory on the cross was real and overwhelming, and all who believe in him enjoy his victory in the present and will experience his glorious reality for all eternity.

Jennifer went out with some friends for a walk around the city. That afternoon it was all happiness. His friends laughed as one of them drove peacefully down a clear street; suddenly, in a matter of seconds everything changed. A driver went out of his lane and struck the vehicle where Jennifer was traveling. The impact was such that everyone died except her.

She was immediately taken to the emergency room; the doctors gave him little time to live, so his parents called the pastor and together they begged for a miracle. Only a miracle could save her from death and so it happened! Jennifer was able to get out of intensive care! His physical and emotional recovery took time, but years later, bearing witness, he said: *Jesus has given me victory!*

Dear young lady, Jesus Christ can give you victory. In this true Star Wars, you too can say, *“we are more than*

conquerors through him who loved us.”
(Romans 8:37).

REFLECTION AND STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Who are the main actors in the real Star Wars?
2. Who is Michael and what does he do for God's elect?
3. What did the war revolve around in heaven?
4. What promise did God give to our first parents?
5. What will be the outcome of the real Star Wars?



SERMON 4

Beauty and the Beast: The True Story

(Revelation 12:17)

INTRODUCTION

The popular children's story *Beauty and the Beast* presents the fantastic story of a prince who, because of a spell, was turned into a monster. His enchantment would only end when someone could love him as he was; that finally happened when a cute villager came to her castle to look for her lost father. The story ends when the spell is broken and the young people get married and are very happy, as all the stories end.

Revelation presents us with an impressive story: the true story of Beauty and the Beast. In this story the original



the beast reaches its state not because of a spell, but as a result of its disobedience to God; and does not fall in love with the protagonist but pursues her for selfish purposes. The ending is happy not because there is marriage, but because beauty triumphs over the beast.

DEVELOPMENT

Please join me in Revelation chapter 12 and let's read the first three verses:

A great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars

on her head. She was pregnant and cried out in pain as she was about to give birth. Then another sign appeared in heaven: an enormous red dragon with seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns on its heads.

In Revelation, chapter 12, two symbols stand out: the woman and the dragon. It is interesting to see that both the woman and the dragon are mentioned eight times throughout the entire chapter. Remember who the dragon is? In our previous message we identified him as Satan, the ancient serpent (Revelation 12:9).

Now, I would like you to understand that Satan works through gadgets. Therefore, the dragon is also a symbol of all power that opposes God's work and makes war against him. But what does woman symbolize?

Before answering this question, let me quickly show you a simple rule of biblical interpretation that will help you understand the book of Revelation. Are you ready? This rule says: *The Bible is its own interpreter.*

To interpret the Bible the only thing you need is the Bible itself, so it explains itself! Similarly, to understand prophetic symbols all they have to do is research the Bible itself. With this in mind I invite

you to read a few verses that explain the symbol of the woman:

- *Husbands, love your **wives**, just as Christ loved the **church** and gave himself up for her, to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water by the word (Ephesians 5:25-26).*
- *I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a **pure virgin to Him** (2 Corinthians 11:2).*

A pure woman, as it appears in Revelation 12, represents God's people or the true church. Therefore, the drama we see in this chapter is Satan's war against God's people or the church.

The church? Does Revelation speak of the True Church? That's right, dear young people, and I think it is of the utmost importance to stop here to study the subject of the church, as presented in the Bible and especially the book of Revelation.

When we talk about the church, the first thing we must ask ourselves is: Does God have a church on earth? The answer to this question is found in the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 16, verses 17 and 18:

Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you

*by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock, I will build **my church**, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.*

Did you notice it? God has a church and calls it *my church*, but in the world today there are more than 30,000 Christian denominations and they all claim to be the “church of God.” And how can we know which one is true?

Revelation 12 reveals at least five characteristics that make it possible to identify the true church. Do you follow me? Let’s evaluate each of these features separately:

FEATURE #1: THE TRUE CHURCH BELIEVES IN THE GOSPEL

Revelation 12:1 presents the woman as “clothed with the sun.” What does this mean? Remember the rule of biblical interpretation? The Bible is its own interpreter! Read with me Malachi 4:2: “But for you, who fear my name, the *sun of righteousness* will be born, and, in its wings, it will bring salvation. You will go out and jump like calves from the herd.”

The true church accepts that salvation is solely and exclusively by grace (Ephesians 2:5-8). It also believes

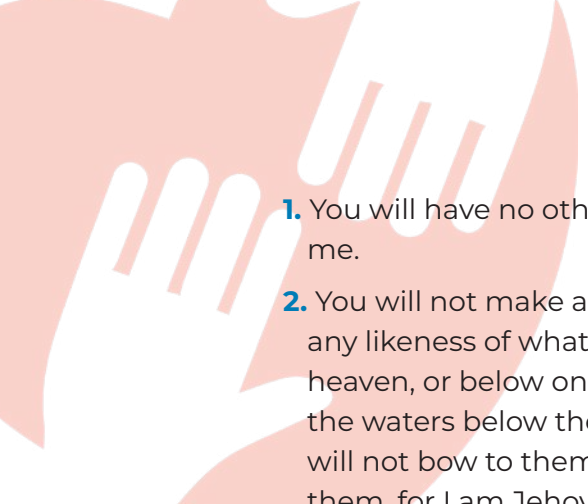
that forgiveness is received not by good work, but by faith. “Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 5:1).

CHARACTERISTIC #2: THE TRUE CHURCH LIVES THE HOPE OF THE SECOND ADVENT

Revelation 12:2 presents the woman with “labor pains” and being in the “anguish of childbirth.” Similarly, Matthew 24:8 evokes the same image of the “pains of childbirth” to speak of the signs that announce the soon return of Jesus Christ; that is, that the pains of childbirth speak of the prompt appearance of the child. In other words, the true church lives in the expectant waiting for its Savior.

CHARACTERISTIC #3: THE TRUE CHURCH IS OBEDIENT TO THE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD

Revelation 12:17 says that the offspring of the Woman are characterized by *keeping the commandments of God*. The true church is obedient to God’s commandments! But to which commandments? To the Ten Commandments recorded in Exodus 20, verse 1-17:

- 
1. You will have no other gods before me.
 2. You will not make an image or any likeness of what is above in heaven, or below on earth, or in the waters below the earth. You will not bow to them or honor them, for I am Jehovah, your God.
 3. You will not take the name of Jehovah, your God, in vain, for he will not give for innocent Jehovah who takes his name in vain.
 4. Remember the Sabbath to keep it holy. Six days you will work and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath for Jehovah, your God.
 5. Honor your father and mother, that your days may be extended in the land that Jehovah, your God, gives you.
 6. You will not kill.
 7. You will not commit adultery.
 8. You won't steal.
 9. You will not say false testimony against your neighbor.
 10. You shall not covet the house of your neighbor: you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his servant, nor his maid, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything of your neighbor.

CHARACTERISTIC #4: THE TRUE CHURCH BELIEVES IN SPIRITUAL GIFTS, ESPECIALLY IN THE GIFT OF PROPHECY

In the same verse 17 of Revelation chapter 12 we are told that the true church has the “testimony of Jesus.” Additionally, in Revelation 19:10 the testimony of Jesus is the “spirit of prophecy” or the “gift of prophecy.”

FEATURE 5: THE TRUE CHURCH IS A TRIUMPHANT CHURCH

The woman in Revelation 12 has a “crown of 12 stars” (Revelation 12:1) and the crown in the Bible is a symbol of victory (Revelation 2:10; 2 Timothy 4:8).

Dear young men and women, the Seventh-day Adventist Church possesses the characteristics that identify the true people of God:

- As a church we believe that Jesus is the only way to heaven and that outside of it there is no salvation.
- The “Adventist” denomination testifies to the hope we have in the advent of Jesus Christ a second time.
- We hold that the Ten Commandments remain in full force and are the test of Christian character.

- We believe in the gift of prophecy and that it was manifested in the ministry of Mrs. Ellen White. Her writings are a source of counsel, instruction, and correction for the church, and they clearly state that the Bible is the standard by which all teaching and all experience must be evaluated.
- We trust that in Christ we are “more than conquerors” and that thanks to his life, death and resurrection victory has been assured.

Revelation 12:17 clearly says that the dragon is filled with anger against the church, that is, that Satan will seek by all means to destroy God’s people. But we should not fear because Jesus Christ is the keeper of the church, and He has never lost a battle.

CONCLUSION

Dear young people, *God has a church that believes in Jesus as its only savior and lives obediently to his principles.* Some time ago a young woman came to one of our congregations who for years had been struggling with depression and anxiety. She had very few friends and spent most of her free time locked in her apartment; she didn’t go out anywhere except to work and the nearest shop to buy beers and cigarettes. Her life, as

she herself recounts, had no meaning or purpose; solitude was her only company.

One day she received, through a co-worker, the invitation to attend one of our church services. At first, she made some excuses, but her colleague’s insistence was so great that she agreed to visit the church “only for once, to try.”

Finally, she attended the Sabbath service and spent much of the day sharing with us. She enjoyed a delicious lunch, and, in the afternoon, she went out with a group of believers to deliver food to people in need. In her own words, “that day was very special”; she had not really enjoyed such a welcoming atmosphere before, and so she did return the following week.

This time the young people invited her to a social activity in one of their homes. She was willing to go and realized that Christians enjoy life in a healthy way, without alcohol or drugs. She said, “I couldn’t believe what was going on and felt accepted and valued.”

Weekly she received text messages with motivating verses from the Bible. A group of sisters included her in a special prayer line; she had no time to feel alone. Six months after her first visit she asked to be baptized. Before her baptism she told her testimony and said that the love shown to her by children, youth

and adults had helped her overcome loneliness.

Today she is completely free, she abandoned the vices of tobacco and alcohol, but above all things, she enjoys a special relationship with God and with others.

If you are not yet part of the church, I invite you to join it as soon as possible!

REFLECTION AND STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What does the woman described in Revelation 12 represent?
2. What is the main rule we should consider when studying the Bible?
3. Discuss the five characteristics of the church according to Revelation 12.
4. Why do we believe that the Seventh-day Adventist Church possesses the characteristics of God's true people?
5. What is the main reason we believe the church will succeed?



SERMON 5

True and False Worship

(Revelation 13:1-8)

INTRODUCTION

Dear young people, the message we are going to present addresses the very heart of the book of Revelation. According to scholars, chapter 13 is the center of the entire book. Now, what do we find in this chapter? Why is it so important? What teachings does it have for us today? Without further ado, let's study what Revelation chapter 13, has for us.

DEVELOPMENT

In Revelation three powers of evil are presented: the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet (Revelation 16:13). You may wonder... and who are they? You'll see how easy it is to know. Revelation 12 and

13 identify these three satanic powers. We have already seen that chapter 12 speaks of the dragon (Revelation 12:7-9), while chapter 13 speaks of a "beast" that arises from the sea (Revelation 13:1-10), and then of another that arises from the earth (Revelation 13:11-18). These three powers constitute the false trinity known as the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet.

We have already identified the dragon with satan, but... **What do the two beasts that appear in Revelation 13 symbolize?**



THE FIRST BEAST (REVELATION 13:1-10)

Let's begin by reading Revelation 13:1 and 2:

The dragon stood on the shore of the sea. And I saw a beast coming out of the sea. It had ten horns and seven heads, with ten crowns on its horns, and on each head a blasphemous name. The beast I saw resembled a leopard but had feet like those of a bear and a mouth like that of a lion. The dragon gave the beast his power and his throne and great authority.

What a strange being...it is definitely a very weird animal! It has the body of a leopard, the mouth of a lion and the legs of a bear. This would be interesting material for a science fiction movie! But it is not a movie, it's a real-life drama!

Let's analyze this strange animal. In order to do this, we must resort to the key of biblical interpretation that we talked about in our last message, do you remember? It is very simple: *let the Bible interpret itself*.

To identify this strange animal that arises from the sea it is necessary to study chapter 7 of Daniel, where a vision is narrated in which four other strange animals also emerge from the sea.

Daniel, chapter 7, presents us with the emergence of four different beasts:

the first was a powerful lion that had on its back two powerful eagle wings (Daniel 7:4); then followed by a bear that was more up on one side than the other and had three ribs in its mouth (Daniel 7:5). Later, it was followed by a strange leopard that had four heads and four wings (Daniel 7:6); finally, a horrible and indescribable animal arose from the sea that the prophet could not compare with any other creature, for it had iron teeth and nails; moreover, he had ten horns on his head (Daniel 7:7).

When the prophet had that vision, he was as confused as you are now; however, later God explained to him the meaning of these mysterious animals. Let's see how the following two verses make everything clear for us:

- Daniel 7:17: *The **four great beasts** are **four kings** that will rise up from the *earth*.*
- Daniel 7:23: *The **fourth beast** is a fourth **kingdom** that will appear on *earth*.*

What does a beast represent in prophecy? It represents a political power! So, when Daniel and Revelation tell us about beasts, they are referring to political powers. This should come as no surprise, for even today animals are used

to represent political parties; for example, in the United States a donkey is used to represent the Democratic Party and an elephant to represent the Republican Party.

It is important to add that the symbol of “beast” does not simply represent political power, but also power that rises up against God’s people. Therefore, the Bible identifies the four beasts of Daniel 7 with the four great historical kingdoms: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome.

With this clarification let’s go back to Revelation 13, where we find these four beasts summarized in one, as if to show that they are all managed by the same power.

So... What fundamental features does the beast of Revelation 13 have? let’s see:

1. IT IS A BLASPHEMOUS POWER

Let’s read Revelation 13:6: *It opened its mouth to blaspheme God, and to slander his name and his dwelling place and those who live in heaven*

The Bible presents two actions as blasphemy: first, *claiming power to forgive sins* (Luke 5:21); and second, taking

God’s place and impersonate him (John 10:33).

2. DEMAND WORSHIP

Verse 8 of Revelation 13 says: *“All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast—all whose names have not been written in the Lamb’s book of life, the Lamb who was slain from the creation of the world.”*

3. PERSECUTE GOD’S PEOPLE

This beast was *given the power to wage war against God’s holy people and to conquer them* (Revelation 13:7).

4. MAKE AN IMITATION OF CHRIST

A careful look at the actions of this “beast” reveals to us that it is the “anti-christ,” that is, the satanic human power posing as Christ.

Now, let’s look at the following comparison between Christ and the beast:

Christ (As presented in Revelations)	The beast (In Revelation 13)
With seven horns (5:6)	With ten horns (13:1)
With headbands (19:12)	With ten headbands (13:1)
He was slain (5:6)	Receives a mortal wound (13:3)
He was resurrected (1:18)	His wound is healed (13:3)
Receive authority from the father (3:21)	Receive authority from the dragon (13:4)
He sits on the father’s throne (3:21)	He sits on the throne of the dragon (13:2, 4)
He is worshipped by the universe (5:13, 14)	He is worshipped by the earth (13:4, 8)

In short, the beast that rises from the sea in Revelation 13 is an imitation of Christ. It imitates the being and passion of Christ; it presents itself with the authority of Christ, usurping his authority and power on earth. He says he forgives sins and demands worship.

Before closing with this point, dear young people, let me ask you a few questions:

- Do you know of a power that, in addition to being religious, exercises a powerful political authority on earth?
- Do you know a religious power respected and admired by kings, presidents, and ministers of state?

- Do you know of a power called “Christian” that has persecuted other Christians in the past?

I would like you to come to a conclusion for yourselves. The beast of Revelation 13 is the antichrist who seeks worship by all means necessary.

**THE SECOND BEAST
(REVELATION 13:11-18)**

The second beast of Revelation 13, which completes the trilogy of satanic powers, is presented as an animal that rose from the *earth*; *and had two horns similar to those of a lamb but spoke like a dragon* (Revelation 13:11).

Like the first beast, this second power has some distinctive features: *firstly*, it arises from the earth; *Secondly*, it has two horns like those of a lamb; *Finally*, it spoke like a dragon.

This second power must rise in a place that is uninhabited or has had little presence, and that according to Revelation 17:15, the waters in prophecy symbolize “peoples, nations, and tongues,” therefore, the earth is a symbol of “little people.”

Likewise, this power must be raised up with the principles of Christianity, since it “has horns like a lamb”; but even though it has risen up defending Christian principles, this power will end up speaking like a dragon. In other words, this wants to say that it would rise up against Christian principles and The People of God.

Dear young people, allow me to ask you a few questions again:

- Do you know of any powerful country today that at the beginning of its history was a Christian nation, a student of scripture and, above all, of religious freedom?
- Is there any nation today that, having had a Christian origin, has become over time a secularized

nation opposed to the principles presented in the Word of God?

THE AGENDA OF THE FALSE TRINITY

Dear young people, what do you think the false trinity comprised of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet is pursuing? Its purpose is summed up in one word: *worship*. The dragon, the beast and the false prophet want you to adore them.

To achieve its purpose, the false trinity has set out to attack the Ten Commandments, especially the first four. Before continuing, I will understand something that I think will help you understand this point. The Law of God can be summarized, according to Matthew 22:36-40, in two great commandments: firstly, “love the Lord your God”; secondly, “love your neighbor”.

If you look at Exodus 20, you will notice that the first four commandments speak of our love for God, and the next six commandments of love for our neighbor. So:

If you love God

- You will have no other gods (Exodus 20:2-3).
- You will not make an image to bow down in worship (Exodus 20:4-6).
- You will not take God’s name in vain (Exodus 20:7).

- You will observe the seventh day as the Sabbath (Exodus 20:8-11).

If you love your neighbor

- You will honor your parents (Exodus 20:12).
- You will not kill (Exodus 20:13).
- You will not commit adultery (Exodus 20:14).
- You will not steal (Exodus 20:15).
- You will not bear false witness (Exodus 20:16).
- You will not covet (Exodus 20:17).

Dear young people, the Commandments are the key to fidelity in the final battle and, therefore, what will the false trinity do? It will attack the first four commandments head-on, which speak of the love we must have for God!

That's it. The dragon, the beast and the false prophet will all work so your love for God declines; this false trinity will seek the worship by any means, and in order to achieve it, it must erase from the minds of children, young people and adults the first four commandments that speak to us of love and worship of the true God.

CONCLUSION

Young people, loving and *worshipping God is the most important thing in life*. And I believe that your love for

God will be tested at this time! You must be prepared, for at some point you will have to face the same trials that the three young Hebrews faced (Daniel 3). You will then have to choose between worshipping the true trinity (God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) or the false trinity (the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet).

Therefore, the most important question ever asked is the one Jesus once asked Peter: Do you love me? (John 21:15). Do you truly love God? I invite you to love him today with all your heart and with all your mind!

REFLECTION AND STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Who makes up the false trinity?
2. According to Daniel 7:17-23, what represents the beast?
3. List the characteristics of the first beast in Revelation 13.
4. Why does the false trinity attack the first four commandments of God's Law?
5. What is the most important thing in life?

SERMON 6

The True Seal of God

(Revelation 13:16-18)

INTRODUCTION

Do you know what Martin Luther called Satan? Luther, who had a good sense of humor, frequently referred to Satan as “God’s monkey.” You know why? Because Satan has always sought to imitate God’s works! For example, God sows wheat; Satan sows the tares (Matthew 13:24; 27-28). God invites his children to take the narrow gate and the narrow path; then Satan urges his followers to take the wide door and the spacious road (Matthew 5:13-14). God compares His church to a pure woman; Satan compares his followers to an impure woman (Revelation 12 and 17). Finally, God has a seal with which He will



seal His children, while Satan has a mark with which He identifies His followers.

DEVELOPMENT

Dear young people, if there is one theme in the book of Revelation that has been the subject of misunderstandings, it is that of the mark of the beast. In fact, if at this very moment you take your cell phone and Google the term “the mark of the beast”, you will find at least 15 million references. It is literally impossible to read everything on the internet in relation to this topic!

But do you know what is most interesting? The most interesting thing about it is that there are thousands of interpretations of what the mark of the beast really is. Some say it's the barcode we see on the products we buy at the supermarket! Others claim it's a microchip inserted under the skin, or something even more sophisticated!

There is not enough time to list all the interpretations that have been given in relation to it; for this reason, it is of the utmost importance that we study this topic, but not in the light of Google, but of the Word of God.

THE SEAL OF GOD

Friends, in order to understand what the mark of the beast is, it is necessary to first identify the seal of God. If we discover what the seal of God is, it will be easy for us to know what the mark of the beast is, since it will have to be the opposite.

The first direct reference that Revelation makes to the seal of God can be read in chapter 7, verses 1-4:

After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth to prevent any wind from blowing on the land or on the sea or on any tree. Then I saw another angel

coming up from the east, having the seal of the living God. He called out in a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm the land and the sea: "Do not harm the land or the sea or the trees until we put a seal on the foreheads of the servants of our God." Then I heard the number of those who were sealed: 144,000 from all the tribes of Israel.

If we look closely at these verses, we can discover some essential truths regarding God's seal.

- First truth: The seal of God is placed on the forehead of God's servants.
- Second truth: The sealed are identified as the one hundred and forty-four thousand.

Remember the rule of interpretation that we have discussed in this series of messages, for let me repeat it: *let the Bible interpret itself*. Following this rule of interpretation, I would like us to read Revelation, chapter 14, verse 1: "Then I looked, and there before me was the Lamb, standing on Mount Zion, and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads."

In chapter 14 of Revelations, we see again the same group that was sealed in chapter 7; however, a difference appears: While in Revelation 7 the one hundred and forty-four thousand—symbol of God's

end-time people – have the seal of God on their foreheads, in Revelation 14 the one hundred and forty-four thousand have the name of the lamb and God written on their foreheads.

Apparently, there is a contradiction, but when comparing the two biblical passages we come to the following conclusion: the seal of God is the name of God written on the foreheads of his faithful.

You might be wondering... Could it be that God's children will have their Father's name tattooed on their foreheads? First of all, you must understand that Revelation is a book that speaks to us with symbols. When the Bible, and especially Revelation, refer to God's name, they speak of nothing more and nothing less than God's character (Exodus 33:19; 34:6-7).

Therefore, we can conclude that the seal of God is the character of Jesus Christ reproduced in the lives of his faithful followers. The seal of God is the reflection of divine principles in your life and in my life! But where do we find God's principles for our lives revealed?

We have already argued that the Commandments are God's eternal principles. In the same way, it is of the utmost

importance to note that when the Old Testament speaks of the seal it relates it to a specific commandment. If you read the book of Ezekiel, you will realize which of the Ten Commandments is directly related to the seal of God:

- **And I also gave them my Sabbaths**, as a **sign** between us, so they would know that I the Lord made them holy. (Ezekiel 20:12).

- **Keep my Sabbaths holy**, that they may be a **sign** between us. Then you will know that I am the Lord your God. (Ezekiel 20:20)

Did they get it? The Sabbath, the fourth commandment of God's Law, is identified as a seal. Why? Because usually a seal serves to identify someone or something; it contains the name, attributes, authority and character of the owner of the seal. For example, every time you watch the president on television addressing the American people, if you look closely, you will notice that in front of him or behind him is the seal, the seal of the president of the United States. The seal identifies who is ruling the nation.

As we read the fourth commandment, which tells us about Sabbath observance, we notice that it identifies God as the absolute ruler of his creation:

Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore, the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy. (Exodus 20:8-11).

The Sabbath presents us with God as the creator who rules heaven, earth, the sea, and all things in them. The Sabbath is the seal that distinguishes God's faithful who recognize His sovereignty. In conclusion, we can say that the seal of God is the character of God reproduced in those who recognize Him as sovereign of the universe. By keeping the Sabbath, we recognize God as our creator and sustainer!

THE MARK OF THE BEAST

Being that the seal of God is the character of God manifested in obedience to His commandments. Then what is the mark of the beast? To figure it out let's read Revelation, chapter 13, verses 16-18:

It also forced all people, great and small, rich, and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hands or on their foreheads, so that they could not buy or

sell unless they had the mark, which is the name of the beast or the number of its name.

This calls for wisdom. Let the person who has insight calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man. That number is 666.

To understand what the mark of the beast consists of it is necessary to stop and analyze verse number 17. We notice that this verse seems to tell us about three different things:

- Of the *mark*.
- The *name of the beast*.
- The number *of its name*.

However, when we read these verses in other versions of the Bible, we notice that three different things are not spoken of here. Let's see how the New American Standard Bible (NASB) *translates* this verse: *"that no one will be able to buy or to sell, except the one who has the mark, either the name of the beast or the number of his name..."*

Did you notice? The mark, name, and number of the beast are the same thing! These three elements tell us about the character of the beast! Therefore, the mark of the beast is nothing more than the character of the beast or the antichrist reproduced in his followers.

Remember how God's disposition is reflected in His followers? In obedience to

His commandments! Recognizing that He is the creator and owner of everything! But then, how does the character of the beast manifest itself in its followers? Simple: placing the commandments of men above the commandments of God. Allow me to illustrate how.

As we have seen, God established the Sabbath as the hallmark of His law. The Sabbath was kept by Jesus and the apostles. There is no Bible verse that teaches that the solemnity of the Sabbath has been transferred to another day of the week, do you know what most Christian churches have done? They have turned their backs on the Ten Commandments and set up another day to worship the Lord.

The convert's catechism of catholic doctrine, p. 50, says the following:

Question: What is the Sabbath?

Answer: Saturday is the Sabbath.

Question: Why do we observe Sunday instead of the Sabbath?

Answer: We observe Sunday instead of the Sabbath because the Catholic Church changed the solemnity of the Sabbath to Sunday.

They have changed the Sabbath to a day man has established! As you can

see, dear young people, the world will be divided into two groups: on the one hand, those who have the character of God and live in obedience to his commandments, and on the other hand those who have the character of the beast (the antichrist). The question I ask you is: Which of these two groups will you be in?

CONCLUSION

God wants the character of Jesus Christ to be reproduced in your lives. God desires that in your lives the fruits of an existence of complete obedience be manifested! Some time ago I learned the story of Brenda, a faithful young woman who decided to live in obedience to God without caring about the consequences. She was planning her master's degree with her classmates, which would be held in about three months. Brenda was happy, she only had one class left to finish, but upon registering the class she realized that it must be taken on a Saturday; immediately she approached her teacher to ask him to allow her to take the class another day. She gave him the thorough and rigorous explanation, but the teacher denied the permission.

Brenda was unable to take the class and as a result had to wait a year before

she could graduate. On graduation day, while her classmates paraded to earn their degrees, Brenda was attending a church to preach. But you know what? Brenda recounting her testimony said: "That day many believed I would be sad, but it was the opposite. I was happy to be faithful to my God. I lost the day of my graduation, but I received the joy of living in obedience."

Brenda is an example of what it means to recognize God as the owner and sovereign of everything; she is an example of what it means to receive the character of Jesus Christ and live in obedience. Today I want to invite you to make a commitment to be faithful to God. Ask God to reproduce in you the character of Christ and help you live a life of complete obedience!

REFLECTION AND STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Why did Martin Luther refer to Satan as "God's monkey"?
2. What are the popular interpretations that exist in relation to the mark of the beast?
3. What is the seal of God?
4. Why does the Sabbath relate to God's seal?
5. What does the mark of the beast consist of?



SERMON 7

The Real Alien Invasion

(Revelation 19:11-16)

INTRODUCTION

A few months ago, Barack Obama, former president of the United States was trending on social networks and in the news for some statements given in the television program *The late show*. It turns out that the host of the show—known as James Corden—asked him if he had any theories about the existence of aliens. In a joking manner the president replied:

When it's about aliens, there's some things I just can't tell you on the air. But the truth is that when I came into office, I asked, right, I was like alright, "is there the lab somewhere where we're keeping the alien specimens and spaceship?" And you

know, they did a little bit of research, and the answer was no.

However, in another program the former president was approached with the same topic and, in a more serious tone, replied that investigations have been done and, if true, many things would change; he even added that “new religions would emerge.”

Unsurprisingly, these statements made by one of the most influential leaders in recent years triggered conspiracy theories that we are on the verge



of an alien invasion. Many people began to speculate that before long we would be invaded by supposed inhabitants of other planets!

It is important that you understand that these are conspiracy theories and that they have no basis whatsoever. However, the book of Revelation tells us about the true invasion of aliens. It will be the greatest invasion in history, but it is not beings from other planets invented by the human imagination, but Jesus Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who will return to the earth in the company of his angels and in fulfillment of his promise.

DEVELOPMENT

Let us go to the book of Revelation, chapter 19, verses 11 to 16, and let's read together the description of the greatest invasion in history:

I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and wages war. His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses, and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. Coming out of his mouth is a sharp sword with which to strike down

the nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter." He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh, he has this name written:

KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

Awesome scene! The great General of generals comes at the head of a powerful army, all his soldiers also, riding white horses. His name is "Faithful and True." With this name he identified himself when he opens the book of Revelation, and now, before closing it, he identifies with it again.

In ancient times, the great Roman generals who ruled the world in the days when Revelation was written used to enter Rome after its great battles and conquests, riding at the head of its armies. They were dressed in elegant clothes and wore on their heads a crown, a symbol of victory; in addition, hanging from their shoulders they wore a wide ribbon on which their name and military rank were displayed.

The apostle John presents Jesus as a triumphant general who comes dressed in red —a symbol of his own blood, which was shed for the forgiveness of our sins— and on his head brought not a crown, but many crowns, as his victories have been many. The name and military rank He has written on himself does not

say “Augustus Cesar, maximum general of Rome”, but “Jesus Christ, King of Kings and Lord of Lords”.

Could you imagine what it would be like if Revelation had been written in our times? How would you describe the return of our Lord Jesus Christ? Well, I leave this to your imagination. What I do want to tell you is that there are no words that can describe the greatness of that day when Jesus manifests himself a second time in glory.

Although we cannot accurately describe the event of the Second Coming, the Bible reveals at least five truths that describe how Jesus will return:

1. JESUS WILL COME LITERALLY

The second life of Christ is not, as some teach, simply a spiritual or symbolic return; on the contrary, the second coming will literally be an event. When Jesus ascended to heaven after his resurrection, two angels spoke to the disciples saying, “*Men of Galilee,*” *they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.”* (Acts 1:11).

Jesus will return personally. The second coming will be a literal apparition,

just as He promised. The same Jesus who performed the great miracles, who died and rose again, will come to seek us, and take us with him.

2. JESUS WILL COME VISIBLY

Revelation, chapter 1, verse 7, leaves no room for doubt in our minds as to what the coming of our Lord will be like: “*Look, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and all the people on earth will mourn because of him. So shall it be! Amen.*”

Jesus himself described his second coming as a visible event: “*Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. And then all the peoples of the earth will mourn when they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory.*” (Matthew 24:30).

3. JESUS WILL COME AUDIBLY

The Bible is clear in teaching that we will not simply see Jesus’ return, but we will also hear Him: “*For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.*” (1 Thessalonians 4:16).

The prophet Jeremiah, referring to the end of the world, adds: *“The Lord will roar from on high; he will thunder from his holy dwelling and roar mightily against his land. He will shout like those who tread the grapes, shout against all who live on the earth.”* (Jeremiah 25:30). Similarly, Psalm 50:3 says, *“Our God comes and will not be silent; a fire devours before him, and around him a tempest rages.”*

Just in case there was room for doubt, the apostle Peter also referred to the immense sound: *“But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare”* (2 Peter 3:10). It is clear that the second coming of Christ will be thunderous! There will be screams and trumpets, and all kinds of intense sounds.

4. JESUS WILL COME WITH AN ARMY OF ANGELS

When Jesus returns, He will not be alone. The Bible says that angels will accompany him: *“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne”* (Matthew 25:31). Notice that it is not about some angels, but about all of them. Daniel 7:10 gives this description of

the angels in heaven: *“Thousands upon thousands attended him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him.”* That really is a lot of angels, and they will come with Jesus!

5. JESUS WILL COME AND SHOCK THE EARTH

Christ’s return will also shake the very foundations of the earth, as if a global earthquake were demolishing the planet:

I watched as he opened the sixth seal. There was a great earthquake. The sun turned black like sackcloth made of goat hair, the whole moon turned blood red, and the stars in the sky fell to earth, as figs drop from a fig tree when shaken by a strong wind. The heavens receded like a scroll being rolled up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place. (Revelation 6:12-14).

Wow! An earthquake strong enough to crush mountains would also activate every volcano on the planet and trigger stunning global tsunamis. Can you imagine it? Vanishing islands and large land masses being torn apart by giant waves.

Dear young people, the second coming of Christ is an imminent event! Sooner than you can imagine we will see Jesus returning with his holy angels! Jesus is coming!

CONCLUSION

But there is one more characteristic that the return of Christ has, do you want to know what it is? *That it will be a decisive event.* And when Jesus comes the world will be divided into two groups: the saved and the lost. Revelation 6:15-16 describes the group of the lost as follows:

Then the kings of the earth, the princes, the generals, the rich, the mighty, and everyone else, both slave and free, hid in caves and among the rocks of the mountains. 16 They called to the mountains and the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us[a] from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!

For many it will be a very sad day, or for others it will be the best day of their lives! The prophet Isaiah describes the group of the saved in the following words: "In that day they will say, *Surely this is our God; we trusted in him, and he saved us. This is the Lord, we trusted in him; let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation.*" (Isaiah 25:9).

Oh! How glorious that day will be for the saved! It will be a day of rejoicing and happiness. It will be a day of indescribable joy. Christ is coming! Christ is coming very soon!

This was the hope that filled Luis' heart. As a teenager he heard the me-

ssage that Jesus would return for the second time, but, like many, he did not pay attention to it.

One day he was invited to some youth conferences and, to his surprise, the theme that the preacher presented that night was the second coming of Christ. Luis listened carefully to every word of the preacher, but at the time of the call he did not make his decision.

He left the church on his motorcycle and was unexpectedly hit by a vehicle coming in the opposite direction. Miraculously God preserved his life! He was taken to the hospital semi-unconscious; on the way, while the paramedics were doing everything to save his life, Luis raised a prayer to God and asked him to preserve his life. Thank God the miracle was performed!

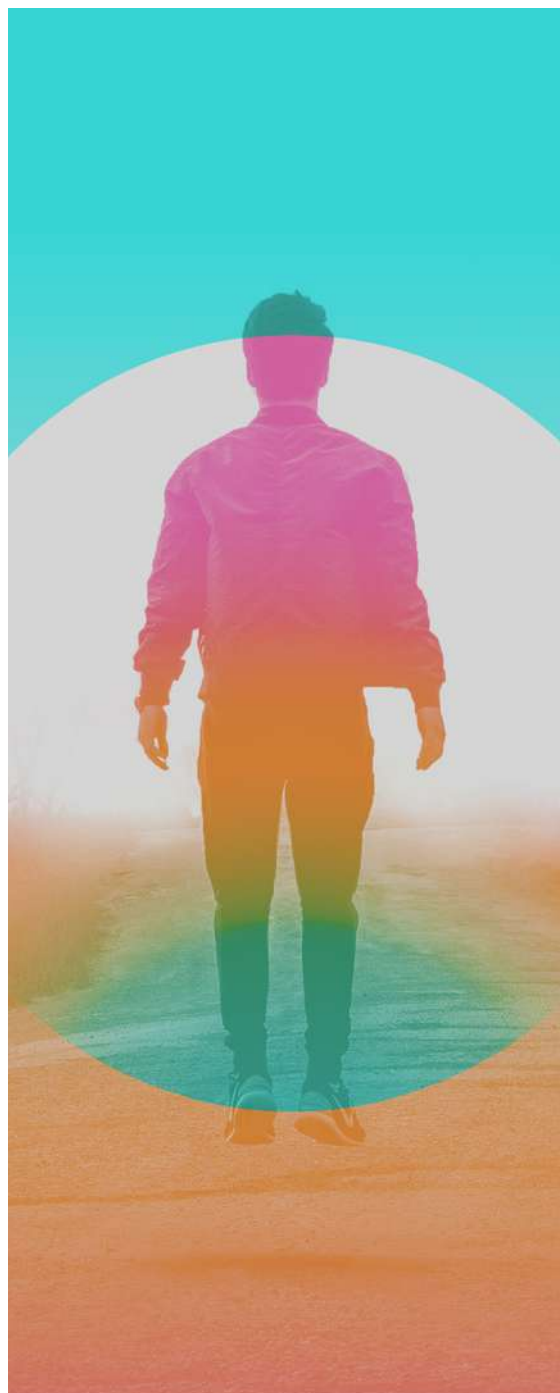
While in the hospital, Luis made the decision to give his life to Jesus. Months later he was baptized and today he is a believer in the gospel and looks forward with joy to the second coming of Christ.

Dear Young People, the aim of this message is not to cause fear. On the contrary, our purpose is to bring you hope! Today God wants to give you a new chance! Today is the best day to give your life to God and prepare for the

true alien invasion: The second coming of Christ in glory and majesty!

REFLECTION AND STUDY QUESTIONS

1. How does Revelation 19 describe Jesus' return?
2. How many will see Jesus coming in glory?
3. Who will accompany Jesus at His Second Coming?
4. What will happen to the earth when Christ comes a second time?
5. What will the saved say when they see Jesus coming in glory?



SERMON 8

(Homecoming Sabbath)

The True Gospel

(Revelation 14:6-12)

INTRODUCTION

The story goes that on one occasion the great evangelist Billy Graham was preparing to get on an elevator; being a recognized public figure it was very common for people to identify him with some ease. This occasion was no exception and a man who was also waiting for the elevator recognized him, so he asked:

"You're Billy Graham, right?"

"Yes," Graham replied.

"Well," said the man, "you are truly a great man."



"No, I'm not a great man," Graham replied. "I just have one great message."

Dear young people, we too have a great message. The book of Revelation presents God's last invitation given for these days. This message is known as the triple invitation of the gospel or, as it is commonly called, "The Messages of the Three Angels."

DEVELOPMENT

I invite you, on this occasion, to read together in Revelation, chapter 14,

verses 6 through 12 and consider God's last warning to mankind:

Then I saw another angel flying in midair, and he had the eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth—to every nation, tribe, language, and people. He said in a loud voice, “Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come. Worship him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water.”

A second angel followed and said, “‘Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great,’ which made all the nations drink the maddening wine of her adulteries.”

A third angel followed them and said in a loud voice: “If anyone worships the beast and its image and receives its mark on their forehead or on their hand, they, too, will drink the wine of God’s fury, which has been poured full strength into the cup of his wrath. They will be tormented with burning sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment will rise for ever and ever. There will be no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and its image, or for anyone who receives the mark of its name.” This calls for patient endurance on the part of the people of God who keep his commands and remain faithful to Jesus.

Before addressing the elements that make up the message of the three angels it is necessary to underline some important aspects that we must know:

First, let’s notice what the content is. The message of the three angels is the eternal *gospel*. Do you know what

the term *gospel* means? It means “good news,” and it is used in the Bible to designate the good news from God, that in the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus man finds the only means of salvation.

The *gospel* is what God did, is doing, and will do through Christ for the salvation of everyone who believes. Dear young people, the *gospel* is Jesus! In his person the whole *gospel* is summarized, for *“there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we can be saved”* (Acts 4:12).

Second, to whom it is addressed.

The message of the three angels is of a *worldwide character*. The eternal *gospel* must reach *“those who live on the earth – to every nation, tribe, language, and people”* (Revelation 14:6). All human beings, regardless of nationality, language or social position, must be confronted with the truth. Everyone must decide for or against the *gospel*!

Finally, the way it is to be preached.

The message of the three angels must be proclaimed with a *loud voice*. Dear young people, the expression used here in Greek –the original language in which Revelation was written– is *megafone*. Sound familiar? Hence the word “megaphone”; this is a device that

serves to increase the volume of sound and diffuse it. The message must be proclaimed with power!

With these clarifications in mind, we are ready to study the meaning and importance of each of the messages of the three angels.

1. FIRST MESSAGE: A CALL TO WORSHIP

The first message reads as follows: *“Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come. Worship him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water.”* (Revelation 14:7).

This first message can be summed up by three verbs: “Fear God... give him glory... and worship.” This sums up the response that must be given to the gospel: a response based on love and gratitude to God for what He has done for us in Christ.

But what does it mean to fear God? You may think that it is to be afraid of God but let me tell you that to fear God is not to be afraid of him. So, what is it? According to the Bible, it is to live in obedience to his commands. *“Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the duty of all mankind.”* (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

We are commanded to give *glory*. We glorify God with our lives and good works. *“This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.”* (John 15:8). *“In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”* (Matthew 5:16). It is important that you understand, dear young people, that your good works are not meant to save you, but to glorify the God who has saved you!

Finally, we are commanded to “worship him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea, and the spring of water” (Revelation 14:7). God is the creator and is the only one who deserves our worship. The final struggle between good and evil will revolve around worship. Who will we worship: God or the dragon? Dear young people, we must be clear that God is the creator and the only one who deserves our worship.

2. SECOND MESSAGE: A CALL TO THE DEFENSE OF THE TRUTH

The second message says, “Babylon, the great city, has fallen, for it has made all the nations drink of the wine of the fury of their fornication” (Revelation 14:8).

The second angel tells us about the fall of spiritual Babylon, but what is Babylon? In the Bible that name means “confusion,” while in the book of Revelation the symbol of Babylon (the ancient city) is used to designate the enemy of God’s people of the last days: a religious political power that attempts to dominate the entire world before the Lord’s return.

This power is intended to “deceive” the world with the teaching of false doctrines. Dear young people, the message of the second angel calls us to stand firm in biblical convictions and to defend them. Therefore, it is important that you stand firm in God’s truth!

3. THIRD MESSAGE: A CALL TO FIDELITY

The last Gospel message reveals:

If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives the mark on his forehead or hand, he too will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which has been emptied pure into the chalice of his wrath; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone before the holy angels and the Lamb; and the smoke of his torment rises for ever and ever. And those who worship the beast and its image, and no one who receives the mark of its name, have rest day or night. Here is the patience of the saints, those who keep the

commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus (Revelation 14:9-12).

The third message is a warning from God, which clearly specifies the consequences of joining the forces of evil. Punctually, three different facts are forbidden: worshipping the beast, worshipping the image of the beast, and receiving the mark of the beast. This is the most solemn message found in the Bible and the last to be announced before the coming of Christ. If I had to sum up the third angel’s message in one expression it would be: Remain faithful!

Yes, dear young people, the message of the three angels is a call to adoration, to the defense of truth and to fidelity. It is the eternal gospel of God’s grace manifested in Jesus Christ, which must reach with power all the inhabitants of the earth.

CONCLUSION

During this week we were studying God’s message as presented in the book of Revelation. We live in a time when deception is the order of the day! However, in this time God has called *you to proclaim* the eternal gospel *with power*.

You may feel that you do not have the necessary preparation or that you

do not have enough talents to preach; however, I assure you that more than your *ability*, God is interested in your *availability*. Remember Moses? He did not have the ability to accomplish the work God had entrusted to him, he even told God that he did not know how to speak! But Moses surrendered his will and God used him with power!

Remember Jeremiah? When God called him, he felt afraid and said he was just a child, but he trusted that God would be by his side and fulfilled the command entrusted to him!

Remember Peter? He was a simple fisherman who had not studied in the great universities of his time, but he gave himself completely to Jesus and the Holy Spirit used him with power!

Young people, today God desires to use you as a tool to proclaim the eternal gospel with a loud voice. Ask God to use you as his instrument! Ask God for his holy spirit! Ask God to use you to proclaim the true gospel with power!

REFLECTION AND STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What is the name of God's last message to mankind?
2. What is the content of this message?
3. How many people should listen to it?
4. How should this message be preached?
5. Summarize the message of the three angels and share it with your friends.



SAVE THE DATE

March 19,
2022

GLOBAL YOUTH DAY





GENERAL CONFERENCE **YOUTH MINISTRIES TEAM**

