

Dear  
*Contemporary Comments*  
Subscriber:



Thank you for faithfully reading and using Contemporary Comments-- which uses a story from our current news to illustrate a theme for Bible topics--as a resource for your personal use, and for your small Sabbath school groups.

We are now shifting this resource to be more. We will be rebranding Contemporary Comments as Sharing Scripture, which will still contain the narrative you've come to appreciate--but now, with reflection questions (all free of charge)!

Soon, you'll see the name change and the rebranding for the weekly release of this newsletter.

If you appreciate using Contemporary Comments as a resource, and know others who may be interested, share these email newsletters with a friend. If you have any questions regarding our rebranding or Contemporary Comments in general, please call us at 800.272.4664 or email us at 2724664@gmail.com.

Paul Richardson  
Executive Director

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## Contemporary Comments

### "God's Everlasting Gospel"

March 9, 2019

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

In an Amtrak train stalled in mountain snow outside Oakridge, Oregon, service attendant James Lake became an angel of mercy to the 183 passengers.

"He kept the whole train connected in a family kind of way," said Barbara May, traveling with her dog Scruffy. Lake found food for Scruffy, and helped her take the pup outside for breaks. "It rekindled my faith in humans," May said. "I've been so disappointed so many times in the last few years with how people treat each other. It gave me hope that maybe we haven't lost our humanity after all." He helped parents find spaces for their children to nap, and organized

music in the café for the kids. He fashioned makeshift diapers for the youngsters, using terrycloth towels and requesting safety pins over the intercom. Lake had cell service, so he passed his phone around to anyone who needed it. He gave his number to the outside world, letting friends and family call his phone to reach passengers.

"People woke up displaced from where they thought they should be," Lake said. "Anxiety builds up quickly. Every experience I had was very intimate. A lot of people opened up to me." After 36 hours, a rescue engine towed the train back to food and a host of media outlets in Eugene. Lake received a stack of thank-you notes and cards-plus a jar of Adams crunchy peanut butter from one passenger. "To see the camaraderie of people socializing and getting to know one another was amazing," Lake said. "They were all so grateful, and that keeps you motivated and positive." [1]

The three angels' messages of Revelation 14 are ultimately about spreading the good news of God's offer of mercy to a world that sees no other hope. Our lesson this week reveals that even the concept of judgment is ultimately good news-it means vindication and deliverance for those who accept God's invitation. We messengers who proclaim God's offer of hope to the world, the everlasting gospel of Revelation 14:6, are God's angels of mercy. Sharing hope with a hopeless world is a great joy that keeps us motivated, and positive.

The angels proclaim these messages in a progression. There is a reason that the first angel's message comes before the second and the third: it provides the foundation of hope that puts the next messages in context. Preaching the later messages without first establishing the offer of mercy creates fear in those who only hear about the mark of the beast and the smoke of eternal torment. It can fuel the darker instincts of some who thrive on conspiracy theories. The assurance proclaimed in the first angel's everlasting gospel message, however, builds a camaraderie of love among those who truly understand the gospel of Christ.

~cb

[1] <https://www.oregonlive.com/news/2019/03/when-amtrak-train-stalled-in-oregon-snow-crewman-emerged-as-source-of-comfort.html>

## About Us

Since 1988, the Center for Creative Ministry has been serving local church leaders and individuals around the world. Formerly known as the publishers of ABBA Newsletter and the Baby Boomer Ministries Resource Center, we have now broadened our generational/ministry focus to include our children. The Center for Creative Ministry took on its new name on June 1, 1996.

The Center for Creative Ministry, formerly Baby Boomer Ministries, is a privately funded and managed para-church ministry fully recognized by the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America. We are dedicated to supporting the local church in outreach and nurture ministries by

providing resources, information, training, and consulting.