

Overwhelming Surprise 1 of 8

Peace and Security

#0417

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—November 1965

This is the first of a series of studies on the overwhelming surprise that's about to overtake the people of this world, what we can do about it, and how we can get ready for it.

Our first text is:

"For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober"

1 Thessalonians 5:2–6.

Now, notice the word "sudden." As a thief in the night, the day of the Lord is coming as a *great* surprise to the people of this world. Notice the comment on this:

"Soon an awful surprise is coming upon the inhabitants of the world" *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 8*, page 37.

"We who know the truth should be preparing for what is soon to break upon the world as an *overwhelming* surprise" *Ibid.*, page 28

Notice that Paul says that the brethren are not in darkness. God's children walk in the light. So that which surprises the world is not to be a surprise to us. We're to know what's coming and get ready for it. But *unless* we get ready for it, we'll be taken in the snare just as the world is. So the whole point of knowing what's ahead is getting *ready* for it. Is that right? That's it.

Now there's a very interesting point in this Scripture we've just read as to the timing of the overwhelming surprise. What does it say? "*When* they shall say, Peace and safety; *then* sudden destruction cometh upon them." Now notice how that's put in some of the modern translations, "peace and safety" is put "peace and security," both in the New English Bible, the Revised Standard Version, and Phillips. And if you can think of two words that are more used in the public press dealing with

the things that people are seeking, I don't know what they would be. Those are the two great words, aren't they? Peace and security.

Notice:

"You are well aware that the day of the Lord will come as *unexpectedly* as a burglar to a householder. When men are saying 'Peace and security' catastrophe will sweep down upon them..." I Thessalonians 5:2–3 (*Phillips Translation*).

"While they are talking of peace and security, all at once calamity is upon them" I Thessalonians 5:3 (*New English Bible Translation*).

Let me call your attention to the two great world powers that are leading out and will continue to lead out in this talk of peace and security. One is the Pope of Rome, the other is the United States of America. When we turn to the book of Revelation, we find that the entire 13th chapter is devoted to presenting those two great powers. The first part deals with the beast. You and I know that the leopard beast represents the papacy. Right? That's it. What do we see as we read that? Well, we read of one of its heads being wounded to death. The deadly wound is healed, and then what? Then all the world wondered after the beast

I suppose we all thought about that a few days ago as the Pope made that historic trip from Rome to New York, and was welcomed by the United Nations where he appeared as the ambassador of what? *Peace* peace. That's it, that's what the world is seeking.

The latter part of the 13th chapter of Revelation is devoted to the two-horned beast. What does that represent? The United States of America. And is it pictured in that chapter as joining hands with the papacy? Precisely. Is that what it's doing, right before our very eyes? But as the papacy—watch this point—is taking the *lead* in the world quest for *peace*, the United States is in a special sense talking about security. Have we heard a lot about it in recent years? Yes, yes. It's the great quest of human beings.

Now notice how these two fit together and supplement each other. Security—what are people thinking of? They're thinking about this present world. They're thinking about material possessions. They're thinking about how they are to be taken care of in old age and sickness and all that. They're thinking about anything that will contribute to enjoying this present life. We now have a program (revolutionary in many ways) that is supposed to bring to the people of the United States what is called the Great Society. What's that? Well, it's another name for security. But, the United States is saying that that must be made available not merely for this nation, but for all the peoples of the earth. It's a great, ambitious program.

Well, Revelation 13 shows that the papacy and the United States are joining hands in a great program that is to embrace the world.

“And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship Him...”
Revelation 13:8.

The Papacy. When you get down to the two-horned beast, it's clear where the inspiration comes from to get all the world to do that.

“Saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed” Revelation 14–15.

We'll study that more fully another time. My point is, here is the United States leading *all* the world, as the 12th verse says, to worship the first beast whose deadly wound was healed. But watch, the reason that people are interested in these two great powers today is that they are hunting for peace and security. Now, that is leading to combinations in every phase of life.

Look at the common market over in Europe. What's the basis of it? Well, they want peace and security. What's the basis of these labor unions and trade associations? What is the basis of the ecumenical movement of churches trying to get together? Peace and security, that's it all the way around, isn't it? And the point is this, they will think that they have solved their problems by having these associations. With the papacy and the United States leading out, the whole world will think eventually for a very short time that they have it or almost have it. We'll see in another study some of the things that they feel have to be done, and that affects the remnant to really get it, but they'll think they have it or almost have it. Now, notice God's answer to it. This is wonderful—the eye of the prophet, looking down the ages, saw our time:

“Associate yourselves, O ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces; and give ear, all ye of far countries...”

Here's the whole United Nations.

“...gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces; gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces. Take counsel together, and it shall come to nought; speak the word, and it shall not stand: for God is with us...”

That is, with the remnant—those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. Now notice, they are *not* to be in these combinations. That's the thing that I want you to see. I read:

“...For the LORD spake thus to me with a strong hand, and instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying, Say ye not, A confederacy, to all them to

whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid” Isaiah 8:9–12.

What’s driving them? Fear! Fear of want, fear of war, fear of trouble and so on. The Pope and the United States are to keep them from these things they fear. So there must be a combination. The churches must get together. The trade unions must get together. The nations must get together. The whole world must get together. But God’s people are told in advance, “Say ye not, A confederacy.” Don’t fear their fear. Don’t get into that. Sanctify the Lord of hosts Himself. Let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread, and *He* shall be for a sanctuary—a place of refuge, a place of safety, a place of security. That’s the sanctuary, isn’t it? Thank the Lord. And so He says:

“Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples...”

That’s the sealing message—the Sabbath put back into the law.

“...And I will wait upon the LORD, that hideth His face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for Him”
Isaiah 16–17.

While the entire world is looking to these confederacies, these elements that are drawing together, binding in bundles in order to solve their problems and get peace and security, God says to *His* people, “Don’t get into that. Look up. Look to the Lord.”

See how it’s echoed here. Oh, I love this:

“Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth:
for I am God, and there is none else” Isaiah 45:22.

Right here, we have the heart of the problem. This is the thing that will save God’s people—take us through *all* this overwhelming surprise—looking to God. It is the opposite of this, looking to man that makes it impossible for the world combinations to solve their problems. The Great Society cannot solve the problems of man. They are beyond human help. As the Spirit of Prophecy says,

“They are struggling in *vain* to place business operations on a more secure basis” *Ministry of Healing*, page 183.

And just as it is impossible for the governments of this world, following the plans that they’re using to solve the material problems of men, it’s even more impossible (if we may use such a term) for the papacy to solve the spiritual problems of this world because the people are educated to look to *man* instead of directly to Christ. Is that the problem? That’s it.

So the message for today, as God has given us in this book, is, “Behold your God.”

Notice how Jesus puts this over here in Luke the 21st chapter. And this 21st of Luke, you remember, is dealing directly with our time. These are the words of Christ on the Mount of Olives when He foretold the destruction of Jerusalem, they asked Him for signs of that and His coming. Coming down through the destruction of Jerusalem and through the Dark Ages, He come to the era of the signs—the time of the end:

“And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars...”

Have we seen those? Yes, those are past.

“...and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men’s hearts failing them for *fear*, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth...” Luke 21:25–26.

There’s the fear again. That’s the problem, you see. That’s what’s driving them to these confederacies. Why, there are literally thousands of people today that a few short years ago wouldn’t have even considered listening to the Pope—I mean, to follow him. But they’re doing it today. Why? They are afraid of something they think is far worse than the papacy. I’ll have more about that in my next study.

But notice here, Jesus says that men’s hearts in these last moments of time will be, what? Failing them for *fear* and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth. Now watch. If we look where they look, we will fear their fear and be drawn into these combinations. In spite of ourselves, we will get ourselves into a situation where we will think that the only way out of trouble is to link up, one way or another, with some of these combinations. So what did Jesus say?

“And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh” Luke 21:28.

Soon, very soon, all the people in this world will be divided into just two camps: those who are looking to man and those who are looking to God. Those who are looking around them, and those who are looking up. Right there, the line is drawn.

Now, the question is this: If God Who knows the future sees that all this is coming, what kind of training will He be giving to His people? Will it not be a training to get them to look up, to look to God instead of to man? Would it? And how will He do that?

I want to tell you something, folks. If we get into some difficulty and we find a certain way to solve our problem, and then that problem comes up again and again, we find that certain way to solve our problem, do we not in that develop a habit as it goes on day after day? Would it not be difficult to change?

Suppose I’m thirsty. “Where will I get some water?”

Someone says, "Well, go in there. There's a faucet in the kitchen. Just help yourself."

Well, tomorrow I get thirsty again. I think, "Where will I get a drink? Oh yes, I got a drink in there." So I go again. After I've done that for a number of days, it's almost automatic, isn't it? When I get thirsty, I just go into there.

Now listen, if we get in the habit of having men solve our problems, whatever our problems are, if we get into that habit, what will be built into our characters? Dependence on whom? On man. And the Devil has set every agency in operation to get us into that place, my dear friends. Where whatever our problem is, whether it's a financial problem, a health problem, an emotional problem, a happiness problem, a religious problem, or whatever it is, that there's some man or combination of men who can settle that all for us. Especially if we'll spend some money, the ads will convince us that there's a way to get some human being to solve all those problems if we'll just buy something or put out some money. Am I correct? Is that what's going on today? That's the brainwashing that's going on.

But oh, dear ones, God is conducting a different kind of school. And if we will listen, He'll teach us something entirely different. "Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." And that's in the little things as well as in the big things.

Now let me touch on a very practical thought?

"We are prone to look to our fellow men for sympathy and uplifting, instead of looking to Jesus" *Ministry of Healing*, page 486.

What does *prone* mean? It means we're liable to, we're inclined to. Our natural tendency is to look to people. Now, a little child does that, and of course, a little child should. Did you ever stub your toe when you were little? And you cried, "Mama! Mama!" Is that all right for the little child to do? Yes, but it would be too bad for someone 30 years old to do that, wouldn't it? Wouldn't it?

How many people there are in this world, my dear friends, that whenever they get into trouble, all they can think of is to run where? To some human being. And *all* the father confessors are not in the Church of Rome, my friends. Oh no. Nearly all the members of the human family, if they know anywhere to look for help, it's to look to some other human being. But if you and I are going to go through this overwhelming surprise and not be destroyed, we will have to learn the lesson of looking to God instead of to men.

Watch how God brings us to this lesson:

"In His mercy and faithfulness, God often permits those in whom we place confidence to fail us, in order that we may learn the folly of trusting in man, and making flesh our arm" *Ibid.*

What's folly? Foolishness— silly thing to do; a crazy thing to do. And what folly is this pointing out? The folly of trusting in man and making flesh our arm. But what is the only way God can get us to learn that lesson? Ah, by allowing human beings to fail us.

Did you ever get disappointed in some human being out in the world, in the church, in your own family, or perhaps yourself? What's the lesson of it all?

“...Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD...
Blessed [s] the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is” Jeremiah 17:5, 7.

Why, very soon as this overwhelming surprise breaks upon the world, as the Lord causes them to see that they've been led right to perdition by the dragon and beast and false prophet, in the very act of talking peace and security, those powers have led them to hell.

Oh, what a terrible awakening is coming to the people of this world! There will be a great terror that will spread over this world from east to west, from pole to pole. The *whole* world will be one great mass of confusion. And right in the midst of that, God will be pouring out upon this world that great hail storm and those other terrors of the last plague, and then the coming of Jesus in the heavens. And in the midst of all those warring elements and confusion amongst the nations, hear the song of that remnant:

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed...” Psalm 46:1–2.

If men fail us, we're not building on them. If governments go down, our security is not in them. If the great religious leaders of this world who have led their people to violate the law of God are overthrown, and the whole world breaks up and seems like the French Revolution, our hope never was in any of those governments—either ecclesiastical or political. Our hope is in that Man in the sanctuary, that God-man—Jesus Christ, Who has said, “Look unto *Me*, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.”

Now, as I say, He's training us for that every day.

So today, if someone disappoints us, let's remember what it's for. If it's a big disappointment, then we have a big lesson. If it's a little disappointment, we can have at least a little lesson. Whatever the disappointment in human beings, we are learning step by step not to build on man, but to build on Jesus Christ. And thus, we are preparing to *stand* when great Babylon goes down. Because it's going down just as sure as can be, like a great millstone cast into the depths of the sea. But God's children will stand safe and secure because their anchor holds within the veil.

Dear Father, we thank Thee so much for the wonderful searchlight of prophecy illumining the road ahead. We choose to be those who are taught of God.

And while all the world is talking of peace and security, give us the true peace that come in Thee and Thee alone.

Give us the true security that is found in Thee and Thee alone. Thus may we be prepared for the disappointments of this world because we are anchored in Heaven. For Jesus' sake, amen.

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