

Survival 10 of 14

Country Living

#0434

Study Given by W. D. Frazee

We started out very early in the morning, but there were several stopping places along the way. Some of us stopped where the cars stopped at the parking place, and enjoyed a pleasant day there. Others went various distances up the trail, but there were a few of the young men that got on the very top of the long steep. Some of them are here tonight.

And as I was taking the trip, my mind went to a dream which was given to the Lord's messenger just exactly 100 years ago this month. I want to read part of it with you tonight. You'll find it in *Volume 4*:

"While at Battle Creek in August 1868, I dreamed of being with a large body of people. A portion of this assembly started out prepared to journey. We had heavily loaded wagons. As we journeyed, the road seemed to ascend. On one side of this road was a deep precipice; on the other was a high, smooth, white wall, like the hard finish upon plastered rooms. "As we journeyed on, the road grew narrower and steeper. In some places, it seemed so very narrow that we concluded that we could no longer travel with the loaded wagons. We then loosed them from the horses, took a portion of the luggage from the wagons and placed it upon the horses, and journeyed on horseback.

"As we progressed, the path still continued to grow narrow. We were obliged to press close to the wall, to save ourselves from falling off the narrow road down the steep precipice. As we did this, the luggage on the horses pressed against the wall and caused us to sway toward the precipice. We feared that we should fall and be dashed in pieces on the rocks. We then cut the luggage from the horses, and it fell over the precipice. We continued on horseback, greatly fearing, as we came to the narrower places in the road, that we should lose our balance and fall. At such times a hand seemed to take the bridle and guide us over the perilous way.

"As the path grew more narrow, we decided that we could no longer go with safety on horseback, and we left the horses and went on foot, in single file, one following in the footsteps of another. At this point small cords were let down from the top of the pure white wall; these we

eagerly grasped, to aid us in keeping our balance upon the path. As we traveled, the cord moved along with us. The path finally became so narrow that we concluded that we could travel more safely without our shoes, so we slipped them from our feet and went on some distance without them. Soon it was decided that we could travel more safely without our stockings; these were removed, and we journeyed on with bare feet.

“We then thought of those who had not accustomed themselves to privations and hardships. Where were such now? They were not in the company. At every change some were left behind, and those only remained who had accustomed themselves to endure hardships. The privations of the way only made these more eager to press on to the end” *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 2*, page 594.

Read the entire dream. It's very interesting. But notice in what I have read, the different things—starting out with what? Loaded wagons, wagons, and loaded wagons. Then finally reaching the place where the wagons had to be left. What did some people say? “This is as far as we're going. Do we have to leave the loaded wagons? No more for us.” But many went right on, on horseback with the horses carrying luggage. But finally, what did they have to do with the luggage? Cut it off, and let it fall off of the precipice. Some said, “No luggage, we don't go.” They stayed there; at least they didn't go up the trail any further. So at each step when the horses were left, because of the narrowness of the road, the trail, some said, “We can't go on foot.” They stopped. And so with the leaving of the shoes and the stockings, as they looked at the barefoot pilgrims going up, and as you read on, you'll find there's blood on the trail as it goes further. Some said, “No, we can't take this.” Only those it says who had accustomed themselves to privations and hardships went on.

Now last night, we were studying the problem of economic survival in the crisis that awaits the people of God. We noted that during the great time of trouble, when the wicked have cut off all our resources during, we cannot buy or sell, and a death decree is hanging over our heads. Angels will feed us. Bread will be given us. Our water shall be sure. But this does not mean that we will have all the comforts and conveniences and the great varieties of food that we have now. Oh, no. What is promised? Bread and water, just the bare necessities.

Will you be there? Will you be among the people of God when they are out in the mountains or in deserts, in the swamps or in the dungeons, awaiting the coming of the Redeemer? Will your children be there? Are we preparing for this?

I raised the question last night; will a life of ease and creature comforts best prepare us for that time? Is that a fair question? It's a very important question.

You know, when Uncle Sam calls men into the army and is preparing those men for combat in Korea, or Vietnam, or some other theater of war, the government puts those men through a program of training that is designed to harden them. They're put out into jungles, and deserts, and difficult situations. Any of you been

through that kind of training? Let me see your hand. The government doesn't say, Well poor fellows, they're soon to meet many difficulties. We'd better get them the best hotel in town and give them the very nicest meals because when they go over there, they're going to have such a hard time. Is that the program? No. Real mercy and compassion means that the man who's going into a hard situation will have some preparation for it. Is that reasonable?

Now will God, who sees the end from the beginning, leave His people without a plan of preparation today? No, He won't. And before we reach the great time of trouble, we're going into the little or short time of trouble. That's when the boycott begins, and we can't buy or sell. In that intermediate time between now and the great time of trouble, we won't be under a death decree, but we will be under the squeeze of economic pressure.

We found last night that the angels feed us during the falling of the plagues. But I have found no promise that the angels are going to feed us during those early stages of economic pressure.

Turn to Revelation 13, and let us review what we read last night concerning this boycott, through which the mark of the beast is to be enforced. Then I want to raise the question: how are we going to live through that time?

“...he causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive...”

What?

“...a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark...” Revelation 13:16–17.

What will you do? Now, somebody says, “The angels will take care of us.”

The way the angels are going to take care of us is to give us some good sense to get ready for that time. I'm going to read you something from *Selected Messages*, book 2.

“The time is fast coming when the controlling power of the labor unions will be very oppressive...”

Are the labor unions among the agencies along with church and state that are going to bring this Sunday law?
Oh, yes

“...Again and again the Lord has instructed that our people are to take their families away from the cities, into the country, where they can raise their own provisions; for in the future the problem of buying and selling will be a very serious one” *Selected Messages*, Book 2, page 141.

Now here are some very clear instructions, plain as the English language can make it. Ahead of us, it says, is a very serious problem concerned with buying and selling. Did we read that in the Bible? Yes. In anticipation of that time, the Lord's messenger says that the counsel from Heaven is that our people are to do what? Move out of the cities and get in the country where they can do what? Raise their own provisions, for in the future, the problem of buying and selling will be a very serious one. I could close this study right now, and we could go home and have enough to think about for a while. In fact, if we would take it seriously, some of us would make some changes to our plans. But let's go a little further and read some references and meditate on this.

This is very practical, isn't it friends? God's message is very practical. Back in the days of Noah, the Lord sent a message that there's a flood coming. Water is going to cover the whole earth. Did He say, just preach and wait, and when the time comes the angels will carry you on their wings up above the rain, and you can be up there on the cloud until the flood is over? Did He? No. There was something very practical to do about it. Noah not only preached, he practiced, and in doing it, he did what God told him to. God told him to do what? Build an ark. The ark, of course, was to float upon the water. Thus those who entered it would be saved.

Now, we're told that that storm was so terrible that the ark would not have been able to withstand its fury except by the miracle-working power of God. Well, if God had to work a miracle to preserve the Ark and those in it, why go to all the trouble of working 120 years to build it? Why not devote all the time to preaching, and save the time that was used in building the ark?

Couldn't God have preserved them some other way? Why, sure! But God delights to give His people a plan in which there's something for them to do to show their faith by their works. Faith is, believing God. Faith is not inventing some method we think will take care of the problem. Faith is in humbly kneeling at the feet of Jesus and saying, "Lord, You see the future. What do You want us to do?"

As we study the Bible and the Testimonies—here's the blueprint. All that faith asks is what has God said? If God has tells us to do it, this we will do.

May I read these few lines again?

The time is fast coming when the controlling power of the labor unions will be very oppressive. Again and again the Lord has instructed that our people are to take their families away from the cities, into the country, where they can raise their own provisions; for in the future the problem of buying and selling will be a very serious one" *Ibid.*

What's the way to get ready for this time of trouble ahead? Get out of the cities and do what? Get into the country and begin to do what? Raise our own provisions.

Now some of you are remembering what I read here from *Early Writings* last night. I want to read it again:

“Houses and lands will be of no use to the saints in the time of trouble, for they will have to flee before infuriated mobs. I saw that if the saints had food laid up by them or in the field in the time of trouble, when sword, famine, and pestilence are in the land, it would be taken from them by violent hands and strangers would reap their fields” *Early Writings*, page 56.

Well, how do you put all this together? This says there won't be any use to have houses and lands or crops because they'll be taken away from you. This says get out, and get a place in the country where you can raise your own provisions, for in the future the problem of buying and selling will be a very serious one. Is this a contradiction? No, it's not a contradiction at all. It's just a question of the timing of things.

Listen, *Early Writings* 56, the one in *Selected Messages* is Book 2 141. You see, the answer lies in the timing of things. When the National Sunday Law is passed, then begins the short time of trouble. Inspiration speaks of it as a time of trouble. We read that here in *Early Writings*:

“The commencement of that time of trouble,’ here mentioned, does not refer to the time when the plagues shall begin to be poured out, but to a short period just before they are poured out, while Christ is in the sanctuary. At that time, while the work of salvation is closing, trouble will be coming on the earth, and the nations will be angry, yet held in check so as not to prevent the work of the third angel. At that time the ‘latter rain,’ or refreshing from the presence of the Lord, will come, to give power to the loud voice of the third angel, and prepare the saints to stand in the period when the seven last plagues shall be poured out” *Ibid.*, pages 85–86.

So, there're two times of trouble, one merging in to the other, of course. During this preliminary time of trouble, as the boycott is enforced, the saints will not be able to do what? Buy or sell. Are they going to survive? Yes. Our people are to take their families away from the cities into the country where they can raise their own provisions, for in the future, the problem of buying and selling will be a very serious one.

You can see according to this, that it's going to last more than a few days; because it takes time to grow some food, doesn't it? It's going to be long enough, my dear friends, to demonstrate that God has a way to preserve His people, just as Noah's flood lasted long enough to demonstrate that those who obeyed God survived, and all the rest perished.

Will it make any difference when the crisis comes whether or not we have done what God told us to do? Will it? Why, it will make a lot of difference.

"Well," somebody says, "I thought that when the Sunday law was passed was the time to move out."

We'll read that, *Volume 5*. You know it's good to get all these references together, and read them together.

"It is no time now for God's people to be fixing their affections or laying up their treasure in the world. The time is not far distant, when, like the early disciples, we shall be forced to seek a refuge in desolate and solitary places. As the siege of Jerusalem by the Roman armies was the signal for flight to the Judean Christians, so the assumption of power on the part of our nation in the decree enforcing the papal sabbath will be a warning to us. It will then be time to leave the large cities, preparatory to leaving the smaller ones for retired homes in secluded places among the mountains. And now, instead of seeking expensive dwellings here, we should be preparing to move to a better country, even a heavenly. Instead of spending our means in self-gratification, we should be studying to economize"
Testimonies for the Church, Volume 5, pages 464–465.

Now, let's look at this. When the National Sunday Law is passed, this will be a sign to us. It'll be time to do what? Leave the large cities, preparatory to leaving the smaller ones for retired homes in secluded places among the mountains.

You know, when an army is retreating, and it isn't a route, it's a planned, orderly retreat. There are stages of retreat. The people of God are going to retreat. Now it isn't a defeat, it's a strategic retreat. The Mighty General has arranged it. He says that when the National Sunday Law is passed, that's a sign to us to leave the large what? The large cities, preparatory to leaving the smaller ones for retired homes in secluded places among the mountains. There're at least three stages of the retreat spoken of here. You can see that. In other words, this is a gradual thing.

"Well," says one, "there's nothing for us to do until the National Sunday Law comes." Oh, no. These other references say we should now begin to heed the instruction given us over and over again—Get out of the cities into the rural districts where the houses are not crowded closely together and where you will be free from the interference of enemies.

How does this fit together? Perhaps I can illustrate it in a very simple way. Have any of you ever crossed the country, and ridden in one of these trains, these long trains where they have the Pullmans, and the coaches, and the dining cars? Have you ever heard the porter, the waiter come through and say, "First call to dinner!"? What can you do? You can go and eat, or you can sit there. You know you can go later if you want to. By and by, he comes through again, and what does he say? "Second call to dinner!" And again you can wait, or you can go to eat. But finally, he comes through and says what? "Last call to dinner!" That means that friends. If you're going, you go now.

And so in this call to get out of the cities, for over 70 years the message of God has been sounding to our people: Get out of the large cities as fast as possible.

Get into country locations where you can learn to grow your food. But the last call is this sign of the National Sunday Law.

Oh, my dear friends, as I think of the many, many families of our people in these great cities; many of them in debt; many paying not only for their homes, but for furniture, and cars, and all kinds of things. I wonder how they will leave all that when the Sunday law is passed? Do you see the mercy of God in sending us these preparatory messages to as fast as possible get out now?

There's another reason for it, friends. Noah built an ark to save as many as possible of other people. It finally ended up that only his family, his sons and their family were in there with him, but others could have. If you and I understand what we've just been reading, would it be an act of love, as well as an act of faith, to get out ahead of the great swarm of refugees and prepare some places where dear people who are fleeing from the Sunday law, and the labor unions, and the violence, and the crime, and the terrible difficulties in these cities could come and find a place of refuge? And if you and I are acting under divine direction, might not God lead us to do exactly that?

And remember, this is not a matter (I make it very clear) of storing up food to take us through the great time of trouble when the plagues are being poured out. I read from early writings that this will be of no use for the saints. It'll be a miraculous provision that takes us through the time of trouble. But friends, would it be a good thing to follow this practical counsel and make provision for getting through the first time of trouble? Would it?

You see, there are two different ways here. The angels are going to feed us during the great time of trouble. If you find a reference that says the angels are going to feed us merely because we can't buy or sell, bring me the reference. That would be the easy way to just keep on doing what we're doing and say, "Well, when we can't buy or sell anymore, the angels will feed us." But this says the way to get ready for that time is to get out of the cities into the country, learn to raise our own provisions, for in the future the problem of buying and selling will be a very serious one.

Now don't misunderstand me, friends, this doesn't say that we're to start next week to never buy anything anymore. Oh, no. You remember I mentioned last night; we doubtless need a weaning period. But in the light of this counsel, wouldn't it be sensible to be learning how to depend less and less on the commercial channels and more and more on what God and man can do on the soil?

In this book, there is some very practical counsel on not making foolish and haphazard, and rash moves. I suggest that you study very carefully this chapter if you're contemplating a change in *Selected Messages*, Book 2, beginning on page 360 "Guided by God's Providence." There are some things we ought to act immediately on. If a rattlesnake is in the path, we'd better get out of his way right now.

But this particular subject we're studying tonight calls for calm counsel and careful planning—Read what it said here. Sometimes people have read something about getting out of the cities, and they've hastily, without knowing what they were going to do, rushed out of the city into the country, and they've come back with their

heads hanging weeks or months or years later and said, "We tried it and we nearly starved to death, and so we're back where we were. Did you ever hear of anything like that? It happens every now and then. If we read the whole counsel of God, friends, we wouldn't need to do foolish things. Read that then.

But now back to what we were studying at the beginning of our lesson tonight. Do you remember that dream of the trip? The people of God in this dream started out with what? Loaded wagons. My, that wouldn't be enough today, would it? You'd have to have a station wagon and a trailer loaded. But the road finally got so narrow that the wagons where what? Left behind. And finally the luggage, and finally the horses, and finally traveling barefoot on the blood-stained path with bleeding feet

Ah friends, let us ask God to give us such a love for Jesus that we will choose the path of sacrifice. Do not misunderstand me, I do not mean to leave the impression that we should get off our comfortable beds tonight and sleep on the floor just to show we can take it. But I do mean friends that we should be willing to follow the opening providences of God, and not turn down His leading merely because it calls for more sacrificial life, what do you say? If God is leading you, will He be leading you to an ever-richer, more-expensive standard of living? If God is leading you, when you move from one home into another, and then from that to another, will the home cost more, and the furniture cost more, and it'll be a step-up in the equipment, the automobiles and all that. Or, is the picture that we have read from inspiration tonight, one in which the people of God learn to do more and more with less and less? Do you see what I mean?

Do you know we are in a society where your status depends upon how much you spend? Even among the professed people of God, there's far too much of this. You can buy a new car every year and get a classier one, a richer one with more equipment on it every year. Well, you must be doing pretty well, even if you're paying interest on the debt. And so in all the other things that go to make up what is called life today; concerning it all it is written:

"There is a way which seems right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" Proverbs 14:12.

Oh friends, soon these cities will be destroyed whether it be by atom bombs or by internal violence; whether it be by mob and riot, or whether it be by earthquakes or tidal waves; whatever the method, whichever one of the judgments of God, these cities are marked for destruction. They are citadels of sin—modern Sodom. Billy Graham's wife said not long ago, "If Jesus doesn't come soon, He'll have to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah for destroying [them]."

This world is an awful place. I've been studying with you last night, and tonight, the matter of economic survival. But I'm going to study with you next Friday night, and Saturday night, something far more important than economic survival—The survival of the home. Will your home survive? Will your marriage survive? Will the relationship between parents and children survive? That, I want to study with you in my next lesson. This is important—to know how to survive the breakup of society, the breakdown of the home.

We're living in the time of Sodom and Gomorrah brought up to date in the 20th century. But God has a way for your home to survive. You can have a happy home, a successful home through the terrible scenes of the present, and tomorrow.

Now back to our lesson tonight. I'm so glad that God has been good enough to tell us what the facts are concerning the economic problems of today and tomorrow—aren't you friends? He's given us a blueprint. It's not to judge others; it's not to reproach others or criticize them—the way they spend their money. That's a personal matter between them and God. But you and I, if we're willing can get down in the secret place of prayer and say: "Lord, every dollar I have is yours; let me not waste a nickel in trying to keep up with appearances, keep up with the Jones. Lord, the strength with which to earn money is yours. The time with which to earn money is yours. Lord, do you want me to use all my time and strength just in making money? Or, have you something for me to learn, and how to use at least part of my time more and more in directly working for Jesus to win souls? All these are solemn and yet glorious and joyous questions to study alone with God.

As we close this study tonight, I'd like to ask a question. If there's somebody here, that recognizes that this lesson tonight means a challenge to you. It means that there're probably some changes that God wants to make in your life personally or in your family. And you'd like our prayers that God will help you to find Heaven's answer to your problem. And you'd like our prayers that God will help you to fit into His plan. If there's somebody that knows you're facing a problem over these matters and would like prayer, would you just raise your hand at this time? Oh yes, there are quite a number.

Now dear friends, let me assure you, you can have help. God has organized Heaven to give you help in these matters. All the angels are enlisted.

“...they are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?” Hebrews 1:14.

Their main desire is to help you walk that upward, narrow, ever-narrowing trail. They'll help you to keep from falling off the precipice as the way gets more narrow. Shall we go or stay? Do you want to stay with the wagons, or shall we go on up the trail? Do you want to stay with the horses, or shall we go on, on foot? Oh, God, give us the spirit of the pioneers. The days of the pioneers are not over. Wonderful things are ahead for those who have the faith and love to venture out with Jesus.

Heavenly Father, we thank Thee tonight for the narrow way, the upward way, the rugged way. We see that there are marks of blood on the pathway, and we know that the feet of our blessed Lord have opened up this way for us. And oh, my Father, we shall not murmur when we remember that he has asked us to endure nothing but what he has already suffered it for us. Give us a holy contempt for the luxury and lavish way of living that is popular in this world today. Give us a love for something more infinitely richer—Fellowship with Jesus. Spoil this world for us; fill our hearts with a home-sickness for Heaven that shall get us going on the trail that leads upward. We ask it in Jesus' name, amen.

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