

# Survival 13 of 14

## *Will the Church Survive?*

#0437

Study Given by W. D. Frazee

This is one of the wonderful prophecies of the Bible dealing with the day in which we live—the present and immediate future, the coming time of trouble, and the wonderful deliverance that is coming to the people of God. Isaiah 4:

“In that day shall the branch of the LORD be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel” Isaiah 4:2.

These are the survivors. The preceding chapter deals with the terrible destruction waiting those who compromise with the world and follow its customs and fashions. But there will be some in Israel that will escape the apostasy and escape the destruction. These are pictured in our text. Notice again the picture of the survivors in the third verse:

“And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remains in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem: And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remains in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem” Isaiah 4:3.

Here are the survivors: Those who are left in Zion; those that remain in Jerusalem. And notice that in the time the prophecy pictures everyone is holy and righteous and in harmony with God’s law. Notice what must precede that:

“When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion...”

If you want to see what some of that filth is, read the third chapter, especially the last part of it. It’s a picture of the time in which we are living. But there are some that are going to get washed from all that filth.

“...and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning” Isaiah 4:4.

Then looking forward to the great time of trouble when, as we have already studied, God’s people will be under the special protection of the holy angels, the prophet says:

“And the LORD will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night”  
Isaiah 4:5.

Here you see, the prophet borrows those things from the exodus movement where the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night were symbols and exhibitions of the Lord's presence and protection.

So, during the great time of trouble when the plagues are falling upon this world, the people of God will be under His special care:

“... there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain” Isaiah 4:6.

Quoting some of these verses, the book, *Patriarchs and Prophets* says:

“In one of the most beautiful and comforting passages of Isaiah's prophecy, reference is made to the pillar of cloud and of fire to represent God's care for His people in the great final struggle with the powers of evil”  
*Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 283.

These verses 5 and 6 are quoted. This prophecy is focused directly and specifically upon the great final struggle with the powers of evil. Thank God, His people will survive.

Now the question that I want to raise tonight is this, I promised I would study it with you, and it is: Will the church survive? Last week we studied about the survival of the home. This weekend, we're going to study about the survival of the church.

I want to show you from the Word of God as well as from the revelations that have come to His people through the Spirit of Prophecy that there is no question about the survival of the church. How you and I as individuals will relate ourselves to that is another question. And while we will refer to that tonight, you shall notice that phase of the subject more fully tomorrow night.

Tonight we want to especially focus on the survival of the church. When God plans to do something, He always gets it done. It may take awhile. Turn to Isaiah 46. God has time. He can afford to take time. He's not in a hurry. By that I mean He doesn't have to accept a slipshod job. He looks ahead. He plans.

“Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like Me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure” Isaiah 46:9–10.

Oh my friends, I like the trumpet call of that, don't you? I like the ring of it. God will not be defeated in this age-long controversy. His counsel will stand. He will do all His pleasures.

What is His counsel? What is His purpose? What is that which He has been looking forward to since the beginning of time? Let us go to Ephesians 3 where Paul makes it plain what this eternal purpose which God purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord is. And it concerns you and me. Thank God we have a part in it.

“And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord”  
Ephesians 3:9–11.

I'm studying this so that we can get a background and foundation as we seek to get the answer to the question, Will the church survive?

You see, according to this text, God has had a purpose, a mystery since the eternal ages. He has been planning for something. What is it, Paul? That now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be made know through the church the manifold wisdom of God.

We might think that Heaven is the best place to understand God. There're some things that the angels in Heaven are looking to this world in order that they may get a clearer view and a more wonderful understanding of the character of the great Creator, that's what Paul says.

And notice what it is, and how it is, and through whom it is, that that demonstration, that exhibition, that illustration is to be made. It is through the, what? Church that the angels in Heaven are to learn something about the wisdom of God.

This opens up a great wonderful field of thought and study. When the great controversy began in Heaven (Revelation 12:7) the controversy was over the law of God, whether it was reasonable for God to expect obedience from His creatures. Whether it was possible to give creatures the power of choice and still there be harmony and unity. God said it could be done. Lucifer said, No, it cannot be [done].

Now for 6,000 years, the controversy has been waging. We come down to this last battle that the book of Revelation especially deals with... The question is, Will God win, or Satan win?

There is more to this than Satan being destroyed and Christ reigning in this world. That could have happened anytime in the great controversy. God could have simply taken over and destroyed Satan. But there is a demonstration that must be made. God must prove to the universe that His law is reasonable and can be kept.

Jesus came down and took our flesh and did it. He was obedient to all His Father's commandments. But this is not enough to convince all concerned that it can be done. There must be a demonstration in this world.

There have been demonstrations down through the history and years. There have been men and women who have, through the grace of Christ, conquered sin and have kept the commandments of God, that's what the Bible says.

But to make the perfect demonstration and this is what God is waiting for. There must come a time when all of God's children in this world, not merely as individuals but as a group; not merely personally, but as a church make that demonstration of complete harmony with God and full union with one another.

This is what our Lord prayed just before He entered the Garden of Gethsemane. Turn please to John 17. Notice how the heart of Christ was set on this demonstration. And notice that it is a demonstration, what its lesson is, and what the results of seeing it will be:

"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent Me" John 17:20–21.

See the demonstration? See the result of it? The world is waiting to see worked out before it the miracle which binds the people of God together in love. It's a wonderful thing for an Enoch to stand out in his generation, for John the Baptist to give a wonderful demonstration of a holy life, but how the universe will thrill with joy, and with an appreciation of the character of God when the entire church shall fully reflect the image of Jesus, and shall be in complete union with God and with one another.

"Ah," you say, "Brother Frazee, you're dreaming." No, I'm not dreaming. I'm reading a vision. There's a difference, you know. Thank God, we are not dependent upon mere human wishes and desires. The great Head of the church poured out His heart to God in this intercessory prayer, pleading for the unity of His church. Will that prayer be answered? Indeed. Will that vision be fulfilled? Indeed. It must. What did we read in Isaiah? "Declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not yet done saying, my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." This is why things have been delayed; the church is not yet in that condition. You agree with me that it's not yet in that condition, do you not? The question is, will it be done? Indeed it will. The honor of the throne of God is at stake. The promises of God must be fulfilled.

Turn again to Ephesians 5, and notice the clear statement that this is exactly what Jesus is going to do. So the church indeed will survive, my friends, the wreck of the world. The church is not going to go to pieces; not at all. On the contrary, it's going to come forth triumphant—the most triumphant experience of the church in all these 6,000 years.

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it..."

Note, Jesus gave Himself not only for people as individuals, but for what? The church. What for?

"...that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word... That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish"  
Ephesians 5:25–27.

Isn't that a beautiful photograph? Thank God. Now I ask you, in Jesus' name, will the bride of Christ have to go to the beauty shops of Babylon to get fixed up for this wedding? What do you think? Not a bit of it. Jesus Himself is engaged in preparing the church for this wonderful experience of being presented at the supreme court of the universe. Thank God, the Bridegroom will not be ashamed of His bride. He says He's going to present us before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy. Thank God, we're going to make Him happy, not ashamed.

Don't you want to be a part of that demonstration? Don't you want to be a part of this church that makes that demonstration? You can be. The church that meets these requirements will indeed survive.

Let's take another look at them, here in Revelation 14. Notice that this is just before the appearing of Jesus on the clouds, as the 14<sup>th</sup> verse presents. But in the 12<sup>th</sup> verse, we have the waiting saints. "Saints" means the holy ones, holy people. We don't need to call ourselves saints. But God will call the people who are prepared for His coming, saints. I'd rather God would call me a saint than for me to call myself one, what do you say?

"Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus"  
Revelation 14:12.

Will they do it? Heaven says they will. Will there ever be people who meet these requirements? Heaven says, "Yes, here they are!" Where? Right down here in this world, waiting for the coming of Jesus.

"... I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle"  
Revelation 14: 14.

When He comes, He's going to find something to reap—a whole harvest, a whole church; not just an individual here and an individual there—a church!

Now don't misunderstand me. I understand that the people of God are going to be scattered all over this world. We studied that. They're going to go through a time of terrible persecution. Some of them will be in dungeons. Some of them in the

mountains; some in the deserts; some in the swamps, some of them will be in companies, and some solitary here and there. I understand that. But two things must be clear.

Looking at this globe, the universe will see them as one church because they are agreed in their faith. They keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, and they are in union with Christ and one another—that's the first point.

But the second point comes first, that's this. Before they are scattered, before they become solitary, before they go into dungeons, and swamps, and deserts, they will exhibit right here in this world a unity that even the Devil cannot question. They will show a close working together that the great enemy will not be able to get in a wedge in anywhere—won't that be wonderful?

"They moved in exact order like a company of soldiers"  
*Early Writings*, page 272.

That's not a mob, my friends. That's an army. Like a mighty army moves the church of God. We're not divided; all one body we.

Oh friends, it's a wonderful thing to feel and see, and know that God is going to come out triumphant in this closing battle, what do you say?

I know there are going to come times when as we look about us, we will say, "Where is the church anyway? It looks like it's going to go to pieces." Let me give you a wonderful comforting statement from the Spirit of Prophecy to put with these clear, strong promises that I've read from the Bible. This is *Selected Messages*, Book 2. And notice, the time is clearly pointed out. It's the time of the persecution under the National Sunday Law; the enforcement of the mark of the beast according to Revelation 13 prophecy.

"All who will not bow to the decree of the national councils and obey the national laws to exalt the Sabbath instituted by the man of sin, to the disregard of God's holy day, will feel, not the oppressive power of popery alone, but of the Protestant world, the image of the beast... Satan will work his miracles to deceive; he will set up his power as supreme. The church may appear as about to fall, but it does not fall. It remains, while the sinners in Zion will be sifted out—the chaff separated from the precious wheat. This is a terrible ordeal, but nevertheless it must take place" *Selected Messages*, Book 2, page 380.

What remains? The church remains. Then to the question, "Will the church survive?" There can be only one answer. The church will survive.

The question is not will the church survive; the question is, will you and I survive?

Now tomorrow night, I'm going to study especially with you how you and I can be sure of surviving along with the church. But tonight, let's keep going over these wonderful statements from the Old and New Testament, from the Spirit of Prophecy, that confirm our faith in the ultimate triumph of the church—The church of the living God.

Let's look at Revelation 12:17 again. Here we find the church engaged in warfare. The final battle is clearly presented here.

“And the dragon...”

That's the Devil.

“...was wroth with the woman...”

That's the church.

“...and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ” Revelation 12:17.

You know, that word “have” there, it really means, and it's translated in some of the other versions—hold, or hold to; to hold fast, to hang right on to (using the common language) to hold right on to the testimony of Jesus Christ.

They won't let go. That's why they win. That's why they survive. Nothing can shake them. They have an anchor that keeps the soul steadfast and sure while the billows roll.

So, my dear friends, the remnant church is going into the greatest battle of the ages, in this age-long war between Christ and Satan. It's going to be a terrible conflict, but thank God, it's going to win. Notice the victory song again here in Revelation 15. It's the victory celebration:

“And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb...” Revelation 15:2–3.

You remember when Moses led Israel out of Egypt; they came down there to the Red Sea. It looked as if they were going to be swallowed up by Pharaoh and his army, didn't it? Hedged in by the mountains on either side with the army of Pharaoh behind them and the waves of the Red Sea rolling there in front of them, they were boxed in. But when that experience was over, not one of the children of Israel was dead, and all the Egyptians were dead.

“...saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints”  
Revelation 15:3.

Read the wonderful story back there in Exodus, chapters 14 and 15. And remember, this is taken as a type of deliverance and victory of the church of God down here today. They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb.

The 14<sup>th</sup> chapter of Revelation, here we look at them again:

“And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion...”

Who's that? Jesus

“...and with Him an hundred forty and four thousand, having His Father's name written in their foreheads... they sung as it were a new song before the throne...”  
Revelation 14:1–3.

Here, they are pictured here as the 144,000. There are many things that you and I might like to know about the 144,000. I have no mysterious answers to give you, but I'll tell you this, the fact they are presented as 144,000 of all the tribes of the children of Israel, (look in Revelation 7:4) tells me that they are an organized group, not merely some scattered individuals here and there over the world. Notice that Revelation 7:4:

“And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel”  
Revelation 7:4.

And so as Paul says in Romans 11:

“And so all Israel shall be saved...” Romans 11:26.

Israel is going to be saved, not just some individuals scattered here, there, and yon. The nation of Israel, spiritual Israel, God's church (Israel stands for the church), will be saved. They come as an organized group. Oh, what a wonderful thing it's going to be to see them marching through the various gates of the New Jerusalem. Marching like an army, not just some scattered individuals here and there. Oh, no, a triumphant army! Marching with banners unfurled!

I know there's a sad part of this thing that I must save for you tomorrow night. Let's turn to Matthew 3, and well see it. The sad part of it is that there's coming a terrible shaking and sifting. There's coming a terrible separation. Because, here's the point, If we don't clean up, we've to be cleaned out, for it's a clean church that's going to welcome the Savior at His coming, and it's just that simple.



If we meet the conditions and let Jesus clean us up personally, we'll be a part of the clean church that survives.

But if we want, if we insist on clinging to our filth, our idols, our worldliness, our pride, and all these things that separate people, and the church from God; if we insist on clinging to those, there is only one future for us—that is, we'll be sifted out, shaken off, blown out, and separated from the church.

“Whose fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor, and gather His wheat into the garner; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire” Matthew 3:12.

You know dear friends, in these oriental countries where the Bible was written, they would gather the grain and thrash it out, either treading it or having cattle walk over it, or in various ways. But then as the wheat and chaff and straw were all together on the thrashing floor, when a windy day would come, then men would get in there and toss that mass up into the air. As the wind went through the thrashing floor, what do you suppose happened to the chaff and the straw? It was blown out. When the day was done, when the work had been accomplished, the chaff was gone, and the wheat remained—The golden grain on the threshing floor to be put in the garner.

This is the picture of the time in which we are even now entering. The church is going to go through a terrible time of persecution and test.

And when you cannot buy or sell if you cling to God's Sabbath; when the death decree is ahead of you; when other forms of persecution are brought in by the enemy; when church and state are united to compel you to break God's law; let me tell you:

“At that time the superficial, conservative class, whose influence has steadily retarded the progress of the work, will renounce the faith and take their stand with its avowed enemies, toward whom their sympathies have long been tending” *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 5*, page 463.

Here's another statement from Great Controversy. Oh friends, this is a sad picture, but it's better to know what's ahead and be prepared for it; instead of not knowing and being surprised.

“As the storm approaches...”

This is the terrible storm of persecution.

“...a large class who have professed faith in the third angel's message, but have not been sanctified through obedience to the truth, abandon their position and join the ranks of the opposition. By uniting with the world and partaking of its spirit, they have come to view matters in

nearly the same light; and when the test is brought, they are prepared to choose the easy, popular side”  
*Great Controversy*, page 608.

In other words, they are not survivors. They go down. They’re chaff. They’re blown out. But the wheat will remain. Not one grain of good, golden wheat will be blown out. I pray that everyone here tonight will let God so prepare your soul, let God control your life so that you may be protected and cleansed.

Now let’s go back to Isaiah 4. I think we’ll understand it better:

“In that day shall the branch of the LORD be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel. And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remains in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem: When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning” Isaiah 4:2–4.

Will you survive? The church will. God pictures here His remnant purged from all sins and ready for His coming. But it’s only those who are cleansed that will be left in Zion. What happens to all the others? They’re purged out. As I said friends, we must either clean up or be cleaned out. Which will it be?

But never have any doubt about the church. What did I read you here? The church may appear as about to fall, but it does not fall. It remains while the sinners in Zion will be sifted out, the chaff separated from the precious wheat. Where is the chaff going? It’s going out. Where is the wheat going? It’s not going, it remains. It survives, it stays—this is the remnant.

Where will you be, my dear friends. Jesus loves the church and gave Himself for it that He might purify it and cleanse it, and present it to Himself a glorious church. Will you be a part of that? God grant it.

[Testimony service follows]

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