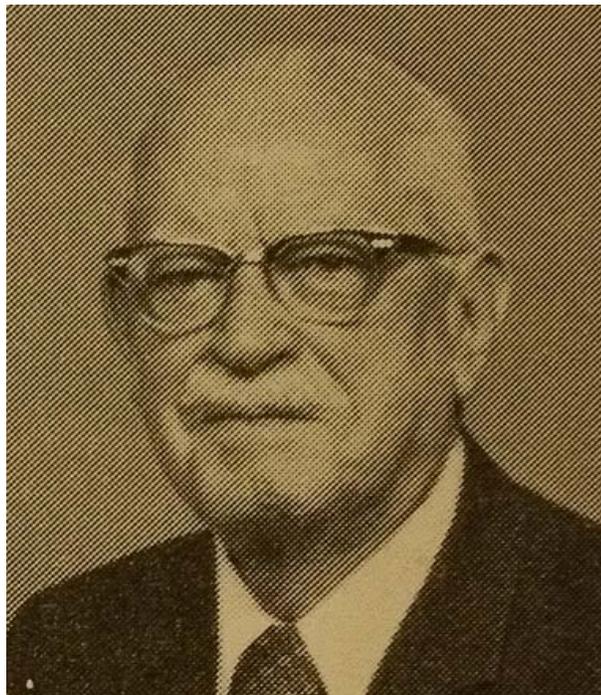


And It Shall Come To Pass Afterwards

Audio Sermon - June 21, 1970



by Patriarch Lew Richard

And It Shall Come To Pass Afterward **by Patriarch Lew Richard**

A sermon given June 21, 1970 at 11 a.m., at the Liberty Street RLDS Church, Independence, MO, USA.

“And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions; And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit. And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered; for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call.” (Joel 2:28-32)

I think you need not be told that I feel honored having been asked to occupy your pulpit at this hour. And I've given considerable thought to what I should preach today by way of subject matter. And being a father; probably with as many children as most of you have. I think that fathers don't care too much about being eulogized at a setting like this, even though this is father's day. Suffice to say perhaps, the word father implies very much, and for a person to be worthy of that name, actually worthy of it, it requires some thinking, some

adaptation, some adjustment. For at the very best for one to be worthy and deserving of this name in any measure at all, he needs to be worthy of beloved affections to those who know him best. You men can judge whether you're deserving of that, and I'll be doing the same thing as we contemplate these things. It's one thing to be head of the family and another thing to be really father to that family. I've long since found that out. But I'm going to talk to you about something this morning that I feel is more appropriate for this time.

I preached a sermon, I may have preached it here before, I'm not too sure of that. But anytime previously I have felt that it was distantly removed from us as yet. But as I come into your pulpit this morning I think the thing that I'm going to talk about is much nearer now than many of us would choose to think. You who know the history of the church, the early history of it, readily recognize that my scripture lesson was taken from the second chapter of the Book of Joel, reading from the 28th to the 32nd verses inclusive. Verses that were quoted to the Prophet Joseph [Smith, Jr.] before he became a prophet, when he was in the process of being made one, by an angel that had come from heaven. And this angel visited him three times during one night as you remember. And then at the early hours of the following day he, on his way back to reach the field where his father was working, they were farmers, the same angel visited him again. And each time this angel quoted these verses that I read for a scripture lesson. And he was informed that this had not yet had its fulfillment, Joseph, but will have. This isn't the only

scripture of course that was quoted upon that occasion. There were several passages of scripture; most of them having to do with giving this young Palmyra Prophet, the assurance that Jesus is indeed the Christ. But you note the significance of the first line of this quotation that the angel used or employed at this time, *“And it shall come to pass afterwards.”* Now if any passage of scripture should be used as my text in this setting then this particular verse would be used as that text; *“And it shall come to pass afterwards.”*

Now throughout the years of my ministry, which has been a long time now, I have used excerpts from the Book of Joel because its language is really beautiful. But never did I until a few years ago while visiting our branch in Topeka [Kansas], and it happened to be the occasion of our wedding anniversary. My wife went with me and we spent the night in a hotel in Kansas. That’s always going to be more of a separate case for me and I’ll tell you why. I didn’t have anything in particular in mind other than I thought I would go through the early sessions or services of the next day and so I’d determine what my subject would be. Frequently I’ll do that when visiting outlying branches. But during the night, the Book of Joel was opened to me just like a scroll. I arose from my sleep or bed, obtained a blue and red pencil that I usually carried with me especially in past years until I got my books all marked. And after obtaining this red and blue pencil I underscored the scriptures in Joel agreeable with the impressions that came at the time. Some of them are expressions of impending disaster in the history making process in keeping with the word of the Lord in all ages. And then under the alternatives to the disastrous conditions, and always I’ll have you to understand when the

Lord declares disaster to fall on certain basis. Always in keeping with the broken laws, he gives an alternative. Otherwise God wouldn't predict anything to it. If it had to be and there was no alternative, then it would be just that way and we'd have to take it for granted. But whenever the Lord moves upon one of his servants to declare disastrous description of any proportions, He gives with that pending disaster an alternative; if you do this you can escape it. Just like he did with Jonah when he called him to go to prophecy to Nineveh; He gave Nineveh the right of repentance and to the consternation of Jonah, Nineveh repented. It made Jonah mad! You know the story. But this is the way God always works. Has always worked that way, works that way today, thank God for that; and He'll continue to work that way. But what I'm going to have to say here will be very offset, will be rather weird, and could cause you to be fearful. But I want you to remember my text, the first verse of this lesson reading which is the first verse of this scripture quoted by this angel upon four different occasions, "*And it shall come to pass afterward.*" Well, when this stood out so pronounced to me that night, I asked the question quietly but fervently, "After what?" Never any time previous to that had this text stood out as pronounced as it did upon that occasion. I didn't hear a voice, but I felt the influence of direction of the Holy Spirit as I have experienced it many times, and the answer to that interrogation was, "*After the things that Joel had prophesied.*"

And so I turned back to the very first verse, of the Book of Joel, and this is what I read: "*The word of the Lord that came to Joel the son of Pethuel. Hear this, ye old men, and give ear, all ye inhabitants of the land. Hath this been in your days, or even in the days of your fathers?*" (Joel 1:1-2) Question! "*Tell*

ye your children of it, and let your children tell their children, and their children another generation.” (Joel 1:3) Not subsequent generation, but another generation! And under the influence of the Spirit of inspiration that night I come to know this was a generation that he was referring to as the other or another generation. *“For a nation is come up upon my land, strong, and without number, whose teeth are as the teeth of a lion, and he hath the cheek teeth of a great lion. He hath laid my vine waste, and barked my fig tree; he hath made it clean bare, and sat it away, the branches thereof are made white.”* (Joel 1:6-7)

Now to begin with, here’s a prediction of a pending war of a very disastrous condition. And you’ll notice at the very offset here, this was to take place upon what the Lord referred to as “His land.” Now Latter Day Saints have some information that no other people under the canopy of heaven have relative to the land that the Lord declares to be His land; a land choice above every other land. This is the land spoken of here that was to be invaded by a great and strong nation; an old nation; a nation with much jewelry and much strength, and without number. Now there are two nations upon the face of the earth today that are not numbered; together they don’t know just really how many population they have. Do I need to name them? They’re of the same brand even though they are forever quarrelling among themselves, but they are both of them are communistic nations; both of them. And what in principal they vary a little bit yet in common they are pretty much one. And this shall comprise the nation referred to in this particular prophesy.

“Alas for the day! for the day of the Lord is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come. Is not the meat cut off before our eyes, yea, joy and gladness from the house of

our God? The seed is rotten under their clods, the garners are laid desolate, the barns are broken down; for the corn is withered. How do the beasts groan! the herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have not pasture; yea, the flocks of sheep are made desolate. O Lord, to thee will I cry; for the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness, and the flame hath burned all the trees of the field. The beasts of the field cry also unto thee; for the rivers of water are dried up, and the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness.” (Joel 1:15-20)

“A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains; a great people and a strong,” now get this... “there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations.” (Joel 2:2). We are living in the hour of this fulfillment because there’s never been as many people upon the face of earth as there is right now, and they’re multiplying by the hours. So judge whether this will take place momentarily or in subsequent years I don’t know then. But this thing is ahead of us just as sure as the God in heaven. “A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth; the land is as the garden of Eden before them,”...and there never was the time when the earth was as productive as it is today; it is indeed as the garden of Eden as of now... “and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them. The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses; and as horsemen, so shall they run. Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains shall they leap, like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble, as a strong people set in battle array.” All of this is in our day. “Before their face the people shall be much pained; all faces shall gather blackness. They shall run like mighty men; they shall climb the wall like men of

war; and they shall march every one on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks;” (Joel 2:3-7)

Now how many of you know anything about the ROTC? Listen. *“Neither shall one thrust another; they shall walk every one in his path; and when they fall upon the sword, they shall not be wounded.” (Joel 2:8)* This is exactly the thing the ROTC is training the soldiers to do. Know how to carry their weapons. *“They shall run to and fro in the city; they shall run upon the wall, they shall climb up upon the houses; they shall enter in at the windows like a thief. The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble; the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining.” (Joel 2:9-10)* Now as I’ve already said, the early part of my reading and dissertation here this morning would be of a very calamitous nature, and this thing is ahead of us. Only on the basis of true and genuine and wide-spread repentance can this thing be averted. So far as I’m concerned I think we’ve waited too long. I don’t believe personally that it’s possible to avert it. And the Church hasn’t done its part as it ought to have done or it could have been averted. And when this whole thing falls much of the blood of this generation shall be upon the shoulders of those who profess Jesus Christ and claim to believe in the Restoration movement. And yet our very ways have given lie to the things that we profess to believe in. Now we’ll go back and we’ll pick up the brighter side of things. Remember my text, *“And it shall come to pass afterwards.”*

We’re not doing too much about the purpose of Zion today, are we? Not very much. In fact we are not the people as of now to accomplish the purpose of Zion. There are several things that have crept in that we better as a people know that is crept in, and we better know it too that we’re going to have to

get rid of it before we ever become God's people. Because the God were here worshiping together this morning has never changed, and never will change. His purposes are not to be defeated or changed. And if we are to experience disaster as the scriptures portrays that we will, after we have paid that price, then shall come the fulfillment of the word of God, "*And it shall come to pass afterwards*" and then promises that follow. And the call to repentance to us right now is, "*Gird yourselves, and lament, ye priests;*"...ordained ministry, now...and that's where the charge lays at the door of the ordained ministry, at their every feet. For instead of priesthood as the Lord had restored his Church by, we have permitted priest craft to enter in and we are saturated with it! "*Gird yourselves, and lament, ye priests; howl, ye ministers of the altar; come, lie all night in sackcloth, ye ministers of my God; for the meat offering and the drink offering is withholden from the house of your God. Sanctify ye a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land into the house of their Lord your God, and cry unto the Lord.*" (Joel 1:13-14) This is a call to sober repentance; and is to begin in the House of the Lord and especially with the ordained ministry of the House of the Lord. Beginning with the highest tribunal or quorum of the Church and going on down through the various quorums; none to be exempt. "*Blow ye a trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain; let all the inhabitants of the land tremble; for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand;*" (Joel 2:1)...and believe me it is nigh at hand right now. "*And the Lord shall utter his voice before his army; for his camp is very great, for he is strong that executeth his word; for the day of the Lord is great and very terrible; and who can abide it? Therefore also now, saith the Lord, turn ye even to me with all*

your heart,” (Joel 2:11-12) not a little bit of love the Lord has never accepted a little bit of love from anybody. The first and great commandment is to love the Lord our God with all of our heart, with all of our might. And the second Jesus said is likened unto it, love our neighbor as ourself. “...*the Lord shall utter his voice before his army; for his camp is very great, for he is strong that executeth his word; for the day of the Lord is great and very terrible; and who can abide it? Therefore also now, saith the Lord, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning;* (Joel 2:11-12)

How much do we hear any more about the importance of fasting? How much do we hear about going into periods of isolation where we can really pray and supplicate the throne of grace? I’m asking you, how much do you hear of that today? “...*rend your heart, and not your garments, and repent, and turn unto the Lord your God; for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and he will turn away the evil from you.*” (Joel 2:13) I’m hearing almost every day from those who are conscientious and sincere and concerned about the Restoration movement. And they ask me, “Brother Richards, how long is the Lord going to put up with the situation as it’s presently developed?” No doubt in your heart, too you have asked that question. How long, O Lord, how long? “*Therefore repent, and who knoweth but he will return and leave a blessing behind him; that you may offer a meat offering, and a drink offering, unto the Lord your God? Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly...*” (Joel 2:14-16) We need less banqueting and more fasting; more periods of really getting together and worshiping as true believers, in spirit and in truth! Something we have yet to learn! “*Gather the*

people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts; let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet. Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach...” (Joel 2:16-17) Instead of making of the Church and everything that goes with it a gravy train, we need to come to learn the first principles of the principle of repentance. “...and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them;” (Joel 2:17) and that’s what the heathen world is trying to do right now, and mind you we have quite a number of heathens within our own framework and rank and file. “...that the heathen should rule over them; wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God?” (Joel 2:17) I wonder just that Lou’s observing our situation today. How much our sectarian friends to begin with and all others. How much do they perceive that we are God’s children? What are the earmarks, just would indicate that we are, other than from other people. We need to be a distinctive people; called apart. Dedicated to an all wise and eternal purpose; the purpose for which our Lord gave his life, but I’m afraid that we haven’t measured up too well. “*Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them; wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God?*” (Joel 2:17) Now when we have done this here’s the promise; and we’re not going to do it until after the things that were depicted here. I’m sure of that right now. Even though the Lord wants us to, he doesn’t want these things to happen. But we have pressed this thing too far; there isn’t any

alternative for many of us. But... *“Yea, the Lord will answer and say unto his people, Behold, I will send you corn, and wine, and oil, and ye shall be satisfied therewith; and I will no more make you a reproach among the heathen;”* (Joel 2:19) once we have truly repented. But repentance is if we called this hour. When we think that we have become a favored people, and can continue to make of the Church a gravy train, and develop a hierarchy; a segregation of people; this class of people by virtue of their being on the General Church payroll; and the others in another class because they have never been favorites. I want to tell you that this type of thing is of the devil and it’s a priest craft; not priesthood! *“Then will the Lord be jealous”* ...once we have truly repented... *“for his land,”* ...basically... *“and pity his people. Yea, the Lord will answer and say unto his people, Behold, I will send you corn, and wine,”* (Joel 2:18-19)...mind you it’s when they get to the point where the Lord is going to have to prepare this. And *“...I will remove far off from you the northern army,”* that’s pretty plain isn’t it? He even tells us what location. But they’re not going to be alone. They’re going to have like varieties with them. Two great nations without number will join hands just as sure as there is a God in heaven. And we’re headed for this very thing.

“But I will remove far off from you the northern army, and will drive him into a land barren and desolate, with his face toward the east sea, and his hinder part toward the utmost sea, and his stink shall come up, and his ill savor shall come up, because he hath done great things.” (Joel 2:20) In fact he has led the United States in a lot of things of a very recent date; he has really achieved great things.

“And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God...” that is on the basis of

repentance now “...*your God that hath dealt wondrously with you; and my people shall never be ashamed. And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the Lord your God, and none else; and my people shall never be ashamed.*” (Joel 2:26-27) Then comes the reading of our lesson, that the angel quoted, “*And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh;*” (Joel 2:28) Now you know and I know there’s a dearth of the influence of the good Spirit among us creatures today; there is actually a dearth of it in the Church! Anybody care to deny that? I don’t think anybody would.

“*And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh;*” World War III is not going to completely annihilate man from the face of the earth. These things are yet to be achieved. However, in this same book, we are told that there’d never be as many people upon the face of the earth from generation to generation, as there was previously. “*And [also] upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit.*” (Joel 2:29) on the basis of genuine repentance now. “*And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord [come]. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered; for in mount Zion...*” we don’t have Zion today “*and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance,...*” future tense “*as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call.*” (Joel 2:30-32)

This is our responsibility. This is always interwoven. We are called upon to be the salt of the earth. We are the people that projects the work of the Lord so that we have history for

our posterity. And all the history that we have that is substantial in the past has come as a result of the existence of the Church in other generations. And that same thing holds true today.

“Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war...” (Joel 3:9) This doesn't say, peace at any price. Neither does it say, declare war, but prepare war. *“...wake up the mighty man, Let all the mean of war draw near, let them come up; Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning hooks into spears; let the weak say, I am strong.”* (Joel 3:9-10) You might just as well. Because it won't be a case of 18 to 21 when this thing cuts loose. Men of my age will be called to the colors. And you can believe me I am enough of an American, with a whole backroom of American men my age, that any time the United States of America, which is the greatest government under the canopy of heaven and the only one that permit this movement to go forward as we have here, in spite of our folly, I'm willing to serve our country any time she's ready to call.

“Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe; come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great.” (Joel 3:13) You know, I've been a baptizing minister all the early days of my ministry, and I'm in a unique setting right now. Working with and for people that are good people; not members of our persuasion. But the queen of this whole flock of people or group of people died a few months back. She's a good active Baptist woman. Plus that she was an Eastern Star; a good woman; had many contacts. I hadn't been with them more than about four months and did you know who they asked to have her service at one of the outstanding mortuaries in Kansas City. I was never so humbled in all my life as when they said, “Lou, would you take this service?” Now these people are ripe. If the Church today as it

was when I first came into it, I could baptize that whole family, of that I feel sure. I'm afraid to do it. In about two weeks from the time I would baptize them and they would listen to some of the things we're listening to today all over the place, by men who have made of the Church a gravy train, and thinks that everybody that isn't thinking in their crooked thinking, a bunch of squares; you know what those people would do? They would do it humbly, but they would say, "Brother Richards, what have you really baptized me into?" For once in my life I'm afraid to do it! This's plain talk, but believe me if this is the last sermon I'm ever going to preach this is the one I'd want to preach.

"Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe; come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decisions;" and this is decisions day *"for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice..."* that isn't preaching now, *"utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake; but the Lord will be the hope of his people,..."* his converted people, *"...hope of his people and the strength of the children of Israel. So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain; then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more."* (Joel 3:13, 14, 16, 17)

Now let me tell you something, that which we speak of as Israel over there now is not Israel at all. We've got the most twisted, corkscrewed generation in our lap right now that the world has ever known. And our people, it would seem needs reconversion to these things!

"And it shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains

shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with the milk,” after these things now, *“and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, and a fountain shall come forth out of the house of the Lord, and shall water the valley of Shittim. Egypt shall be a desolation, and Edom shall be a desolate wilderness, for the violence against the children of Judah, because they have shed innocent blood [in their land.] But Judah shall dwell for ever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation.”* (Joel 3:18) I’m going to close directly, by injecting a thought here that I hope all of you believe in. Do you accept the third book that the Lord has provided for us as a key that unlocks all other records that we have? And I’m referring to the Doctrine and Covenants. Do You? A lot of our people don’t any more. And they have joined hands with a group of kooks that think they want peace at any price. And they cry, “Peace, peace, and there is no peace!” And this type of an element genders that very thing in its self and prevents the very thing that they clamor for. Now this is what the Lord has said; sixty-third section of the Doctrine and Covenants in the ninth verse. *“I, the Lord am angry with the wicked;”* do you think there’s any wicked for him to be angry with? Now he said this. *“I am holding my Spirit from the inhabitants of the earth.”* Here’s the answer. The answer to the question that I’m getting almost every day; why this and why that? *“I have sworn in my wrath and decreed wars upon the face of the earth...”* A lot of people won’t believe that today, yet the Lord has said that he does, just that very thing. *“...and the wicked shall slay the wicked, and fear shall come upon every man and the Saints [also] shall hardly escape;”* Let’s wake up. *“nevertheless, I, the Lord, am with them, and will come down in heaven from the presence of my Father, and consume the wicked with unquenchable fire.”* All

of this is in the scripture “*And it shall come to pass afterwards*” now mind you. “*And, behold, this is not yet, but by and by; wherefore seeing that I, the Lord, have decreed all these things upon the face of the earth, I will that my saints should be assembled upon the land of Zion; and that every man should take righteousness in his hands, and faithfulness upon his loins, and lift a warning voice unto the inhabitants of the earth; and declare both by word and by flight, that desolation shall come upon the wicked.*” (D&C 63:9a-e) I think I’ve said enough. But our people need not to be calamitous minded. And the only thing that you need to fear is your own sins. And we need to be delivered from self and sin because self itself is the very center of sin! And the God that we worship that brought the Latter-Day work into being, cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance! And yet his disposition towards even the sinner is that he’ll be given an opportunity to repent. What do you say you, and I, all of us together; exercise this great second principle of the gospel, upon the bended knees of our bodies, supplicating the throne of grace for supplemental grace, enabling us to have the power and genius of true repentance.

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