

the earth, is absurd. The only reason given for this supposed action was that Ervil was out of harmony with Joel in relation to Priesthood doctrine and administration, which was in reality very much to his credit. For Joel to pretend that Ervil was unworthy or incompetent to appoint a successor in the Patriarchal Office but was worthy to hold the theocratic keys of Judah over the whole earth at this same time was a very strange approach to the legal problems of priesthood government with which he was confronted.

For Joel to suppose that he could remove the Patriarchal Priesthood from the earth, arbitrarily take over all of its powers and functions for a period of two years, and then restore it again, was presumptuous in the extreme. The carrying out of this pretense was only made possible by the prejudice and irresponsibility of the general membership of the priesthood organization, and by the state of ignorance in which they were found at that time. Joel had usurped the keys and powers of the Patriarchal Priesthood several years before that time upon the premise that they pertained exclusively to the Office of Moses, and he merely took a course to formalize this action when he went through the process of "releasing" the true Patriarch. Through this action he arbitrarily took over a patriarchal office that only had power to preach repentance and baptism according to his own doctrine, and he personally established this office over a presidency of the Church that he ordained by virtue of its authority. Two years later, Joel appointed his brother Verlan to succeed him in this false patriarchal office. In this way, the word of a man was permitted to take precedence over the word of God respecting these great issues, as had previously been done in many other areas of doctrine and law, causing man-worship which is one of the most dangerous and destructive forms of devil-worship to be confirmed and established as the religion of the people. Thus Joel fully and finally established the basis of a false faith and a reign of crime as religion, with all the true theocratic priesthood functions abolished, and in this manner the devil was permitted to take control of the Church. This state of affairs had to continue until the doctrines, policies and procedures thus established were abandoned by those who were deceived by them. Until the people themselves should be willing to pay the price for righteous priesthood government, they would have to suffer the consequences of the apostasy.

In that kind of a movement, there is always a group of honor seeking sycophants who are willing to use lies and hypocrisy to lead all those who will follow them to destruction. The men in a priesthood organization that is led by a servant of the devil are directly impregnated with the spirit of death by their leader who stands over them, bestowing upon them great vain honors and inciting them to do evil. It is for this reason that the spirit and the tactics of the devil have been so abundantly manifested since that time among some of the leaders of the Church of the Firstborn of the Fullness of Times in relation to the present doctrinal controversy. This is why the spirit that predominates among the men who have actively supported this administration is an increased portion of the same smooth sanctimonious spirit of the anti-christ that guides and inspires the members of other false or apostate churches. Those who will not hear the truth at this time, arise and wash their hands of this great wickedness, must go down to darkness and death.

For the time cometh, saith the Lamb of God, that I will work a great and a marvelous work among the children of men; a work which shall be everlasting, either on the one hand or on the other--either to the convincing of them unto peace and life eternal, or unto the deliverance of them to the hardness of their hearts and the blindness of their minds, unto their being brought down into captivity, and also into destruction, both temporally and spiritually, according to the captivity of the devil, of which I have spoken. 1 Nephi 14:7

Joel F. LeBaron, in the beginning of his work, supposedly went through the process of meditation and prayer to determine the true meaning of scripture. He was, however, attempting to act in the keys of an office for which he was not well

qualified. There were many great and important things pertaining to the Kingdom of God that he was unable to correctly explain. As these things were explained by Ervil, Joel took the credit for them, and made arrangements for others to take the blame for all possible errors as they should be made known. From the beginning, Joel, Himself, did not know the difference between his function in the Office of Moses, and his function in the Office of Aaron. It was in this state of ignorance, that he applied the prophecies that relate to the exercise of the keys and powers of the Patriarchal Priesthood to the Office of Moses. It was this lack of knowledge of the respective powers and jurisdictions of these offices, that led him to presumptuously usurp the keys and powers of the Office of Aaron as belonging to the Office of Moses. After having been given the honor due the Patriarchal Priesthood for a period of six years, he was unwilling to assume his rightful place, even though he was directly commanded by God to do so, and he did not permit the great errors made under his administration to be corrected. The correction of these errors of doctrine and administration would have permitted the Patriarch and the Bishop as well as the other officers to function properly in their offices. But Joel would never permit them to be corrected. His reason for not wanting them to be corrected becomes evident when the magnitude of these errors is properly understood.

When the time came that the Patriarch earnestly sought to have Joel cease working illegally in economics, which was almost his only function at that time, and begin to magnify the apostolic powers of the Office of President of the Church, he not only failed to do so, but he continued asserting that the Office of Moses holds administrative authority directly over the Office of Levi to justify his misadministration. It was in attempting to justify his usurpation of power, that he came to invent the false concept that the Patriarchs of ancient Israel held and exercised the keys and powers of civil and economic government exclusively by virtue of special commissions through Moses in his translated state, and that Joseph Smith had authority in these same fields only by a commission through the translated John the Revelator.

Joel recognized that Ervil held the Patriarchal Office that had been restored by John the Baptist, and that he stood as the President of the organized Melchizedek Priesthood, holding the keys of the sealing power. He recognized that by virtue of the Melchizedek Priesthood men stand as patriarchs, priests and kings over their own families and kingdoms. He did not recognize, nor seem to understand, however, that the Melchizedek Priesthood constitutes civil, economic and spiritual authority over family government on the celestial level and that those holding this Priesthood are subject by covenant to celestial civil law in the administration of their family affairs. Joel could not conceive of anything but celestial civil law as the basis of civil protection and preservation for the standards that pertain to the celestial order of government. His misconduct in relation to the exercise of the sealing keys, caused by his attempting to exercise these keys illegally in opposition to the patriarchal administration, caused great sorrow, confusion and disharmony in the Church. During the time of this conflict, Joel could not even reason sensibly on the subject of celestial civil law, which is the minimum law of the Melchizedek Priesthood and of all the glorified celestial worlds in the entire universe. This is the law upon which the exercise of the sealing power is based, but he understood so little about this that he caused total rebellion against the administration of the celestial law by flatly proclaiming that there is no such thing as celestial civil law. This constituted a proclamation of out and out apostasy from the celestial law, and although it could not immediately cause or bring about total apostasy on this level, it did however cause the people to harden their hearts against celestial administration and prepared them to uphold further acts of apostasy. The Lord had said:

And Zion cannot be built up unless it is by the principles of the law of the celestial kingdom; otherwise I cannot receive her unto myself. DC 105:5

The Patriarch had the policy of requiring that all the general authorities magnify their callings, uphold the authority of the Priesthood and keep their covenants. He required that the spirit of a blood covenant on behalf of the defense

of Zion be instilled in the hearts and minds of the whole Church membership. He required that the Church purify itself in relation to the application of the civil law on the least level, and that the judicial powers of the Church be brought to function legally on that basis. There were numerous individuals among the leading men of the Church, including Joel, himself, who were not willing to have the civil law taught on all levels, nor to require that the members of the Church keep this law, because of being guilty themselves of its violation both in regard to their priesthood administration as well as in their private affairs. This resistance, on their part, to the application of the law of God is one of the principal areas where there began to be serious division within the Church, and it was because of this division that power politics began to prevail over justice and judgment.

Those who were guilty of violation of the law, upon whom judgment was threatened or executed, in most instances ran to Joel to have their case judged personally and privately by him. After being forgiven by him, as almost inevitably happened, they would tell their version of the differences between the word of Joel and the legal administration of judgment under the Patriarch. Even though these individuals were law violators, they pretended to become sticklers for the pure law and rejected Ervil's application of law as though Joel and themselves were the legal judges in matters of law and its application. Although the law in its purity and perfection could not be applied on the highest level at that time and under those conditions in many cases, these men made the most of the fact that the Patriarch was not giving it its highest application. Even though these persons were grossly ignorant and unenlightened respecting many of the processes of the application of law, scarcely understanding its meaning and purposes and that there is a difference between the meaning and purpose of the law and its application, they conducted themselves as great wise elders and made the most in power politics of the differences between the position taken by Joel and that taken by Ervil. Little did they realize that they were being engulfed by the most deceptive and dangerous apostasy of all time. Little did they know that the Lord was testing their integrity to Him and to His law, and much less did they know the reason why the test was applied in this manner.

At the very time, when Joel was walking in darkness at noon day and proclaiming a state of total rebellion against the exercise of the civil authority comprehended in the sealing keys of the Holy Priesthood, he pretended to be standing as God in his relationship to the people in the direct exercise of these keys. At the time of the greatest conflict that ever arose in the Church regarding the Patriarch's administration of the sealing keys, Joel gave full support to the most subtle campaign of defamation against the Patriarch that had ever developed. He completely denied the necessity for the administration of the celestial civil law, and in fact, went so far as to state that any efforts that should be made to administer this law in the future would be the practice of priestcraft based upon the false traditions of the Fundamentalists. The officers of the Priesthood closed their minds and hardened their hearts against the pouring out of any further light and knowledge regarding this matter, and the doom of the Church of the Firstborn of the Fulness of Times was sealed as far as any hope of receiving the higher spiritual blessings in the future was concerned, until a state of repentance could be achieved.

It was not long after that time, that yet another conflict arose in relation to the only remaining spiritual standard of Zion that Joel had not thrown down, walked over, or otherwise nullified. This was in regard to the teaching of the civil law. To offset the tendencies in the Church toward apostasy, both on the part of the individual members as well as in relation to the priesthood administrations, Ervil had introduced the doctrine of the civil law with power. This brought great and unrelenting opposition to his administration from within. At the time that the civil law was first being taught publicly, prior to the apostasy of 1966 that divided the Church in relation to these issues, Joel was fully dedicated in leading all those who would follow him in an economic program based upon false principles, while at the same time giving nothing but opposition to the program of raising up the standard of God's law of liberty as an ensign to the nations. At the time when the full power and support of the Church should have been given to the teaching and

proclaiming of the civil law, Joel was usurping the keys of the Patriarchal Priesthood, together with the powers of the Bishopric, in illegally taking all of the strength and resources of the Church that he could obtain to carry out his failing economic ventures. While Ervil was struggling to get the faith of the people well enough established in the doctrine of the civil law, and in other important principles, so that they could withstand the changes that would have to be made in relation to the doctrine and administration of the Priesthood before any significant further progress could be made, Joel and others commenced resorting to power politics to enhance their personal popularity and domination. Personal ambitions and grudges played an important role in these affairs, and considerable effort was made by Joel to discourage and prevent the introduction of any further light and knowledge in the Church on any subject whatsoever, so as to not eclipse his supposed importance as the revealer of all knowledge and doctrine. At the time the civil law was introduced, Joel claimed revelation by the authority of the Office of Moses to establish the terrestrial economic government and raise an economic ensign to the world, prophesying that the Lord would bless this economic government and that in seven years it would triumph over all its enemies. It was only after several years had passed and after the attempt to establish a terrestrial economy had completely and miserably failed, that Joel became converted to the doctrine of the civil law. He then climbed on the civil law band wagon and began to let it appear that he was the revealer of the civil law as well as the great teacher of it. It had been explained to the people by Ervil that the recognition and respect of the rights of men is mandatory by the law of God as well as by natural law, and that this requires a minimum level of education. This basic education is also indispensable to insure the performance of the minimum civil duties by the people that will cause true liberty to be an effective reality. It is self evidently apparent, that this education cannot be less mandatory by natural law than are the requirements to recognize and respect the rights of others, and to perform the indispensable minimum civil duties. The commandment to sanctify the Sabbath day was given primarily as a civil law, and, as such, required the establishment and maintenance, as well as the reception of permanent organized public education on a celestial level as the minimum requirement for compliance. To those who are under celestial covenants, the sanctification of the Sabbath day requires education on the level of celestial civil law. This commandment is included as part of the law of the Church, and obedience to it on the minimum level is mandatory, both by natural law as well as by the law of God. In spite of the plainness and simplicity with which these things were taught, and in spite of the penetrating clarity with which these truths impress themselves upon the mind of an honest man, Joel publicly declared that the acceptance of the teaching of this law is not mandatory upon the members of the Church, and also stated that the teaching of it is not mandatory upon the Priesthood. He did this at the very time that he was attempting to take the credit for being the great teacher and revealer of this law.

In this way, both the telestial and celestial standards of liberty were undermined and opposed by Joel at the precise time when the greatest damage to the cause of Zion could be done. He never repented of these acts of apostasy and steadily went down hill in his spirituality and understanding. This was a far cry indeed from the standard of the Church of the Firstborn in heaven that Joel had claimed authority to proclaim to the world when he published a tract under the name of Floren M. LeBaron, on the subject of the three heavens or degrees of glory in the beginning of the work.

Joel took the false position of standing as the only file leader of the Patriarch, holding complete control and dominion over him, with power to appoint or release Patriarchs as a foreman has the power to hire and fire laborers. The truth of this matter is that the Patriarchal Priesthood can only be obtained and exercised by a legal process having great requirements. A man can not function in it except by fulfilling these requirements, in keeping with the law and order of the Priesthood. No Presiding Patriarch has ever been deprived of his office and calling in the history of the world, nor has a man holding and functioning in this

office ever led the people astray. A man holding the Office of Moses has never directly led the people at all except in the absence of a legally qualified Patriarch. The Office of Moses does not constitute the office of the President of the High Priesthood, but rather it is the office of a revealer of basic law who has power under special conditions to directly represent God the Father.

For a people to presume to be taught and led directly by a man standing as God to them is for them to be lifted up in the pride of their hearts above all nations, and above all people of the whole earth. Because Joel claimed to hold this type of power and authority, and because he accepted the honors and adulation of the people on this basis instead of establishing and carrying out the law of God, he thereby took a course to destroy them as well as destroying the work of God. It is true that the restoration of all things and the fulfillment of certain great prophecies was destined to come through Joel F. LeBaron in a way similar to the manner in which these things came through John the Revelator. However, it was not true that Joel was to be the man who would personally do the work described in the prophecies. His bowels have not been a fountain of truth in the teaching of the laws and commandments of God to the people and in the imparting of pure knowledge to them, which is the power of salvation, and a function of the Patriarchal Priesthood.

In the beginning of his work, Joel was permitted to reveal truths from heaven that could have broken the power of the former great apostasies in Mormondom had the information been fully understood and correctly applied. The revealing of these truths, which were keys to unlock the mysteries of the scriptures in relation to the organization of the Kingdom of God, resulted in the coming forth of a flood of light and knowledge through the Patriarchal Priesthood that was held even then by Ervil M. LeBaron. Ervil had received the general Patriarchal Priesthood, that holds the keys, under the hands of his father nearly eight years before the Office of Moses was conferred upon Joel. Ervil also had received the promise of his calling and election through the Patriarchal Priesthood long before any of his brothers paid the price necessary to receive this great blessing. He was the one to whom rightly belonged the Priesthood and the keys of the Kingdom. Ervil administered the letter of the gospel and carried the weight of the teaching and preaching of the gospel from the beginning, because there was no one else qualified to do so. In his own way Joel, likewise, was the only one qualified to do the work which he has done, both for good and for evil.

There was a difference between these two men. Joel, because of his nature and perhaps because of his personal philosophy or the experience of earlier years, has almost always taken a course to be praised and loved of men. Ervil's greatest desire, on the other hand, has been to see the law of God established in the hearts and minds of the people to a degree that would cause the work of God to prosper; and he has consistently taken a most determined and steady course to bring this about. He has said repeatedly that it is infinitely more important that the proper laws be established and carried out than it is for any given individual to hold office in this mortal state.

The truth is much more powerful, and is by far more important than any organization or administration. It was in relation to the love of truth that the great test was to be brought upon the people of God at the last time, before the winding-up scene, it was necessary that a people be prepared and tested in every way before the Kingdom of God should be placed in their hands. A choice people first had to be gathered from the world under adverse and trying circumstances. These people then were required to prove that they loved the truth more than they loved high offices and the praise of men. They were required to prove their integrity to truth by giving up these things on behalf of the truth as taught to them by a servant that they, themselves, as kings in the priesthood, had helped to defame. They were turned over to be led by the devil for a season because they were required to atone, by suffering in darkness for the sins that they had committed against God, while the light was shining among them, at the time that they were offered great blessing. They not only refused to receive this