

December 8, 1981

Remember Pearl Harbor

Turn to the Book of Luke. Luke 17:26-28. Just as it was in the days of Noah, so also will it be in the days of the Son of Man. People were eating, drinking, marrying and being given in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark. Then the flood came and destroyed them all. It was the same in the days of Lot; people were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building, but in the day Lot left Sodom, fire and sulphur rained down from heaven and destroyed them all.'

Sudden changes may occur in the lives of any of us. At this time of year I think we can be particularly conscious of this because of what happened 40 years ago, yesterday. At that time people in America were not much concerned about world conditions. There were a few who were energetically going about the country declaring that what happened abroad was nothing for us to concern ourselves with. We wanted peace, we wanted to stay out of these foolish wars across the seas.

It was true that Hitler had organized the German people into a cohesive force. He had directed his armies into France, Belgium, Denmark, Norway, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and had taken a large part of Russia. What concern was that of ours? Everything was going on as it had been in this country. We were gradually getting out of the depression. Things were not yet good. Things were much better than they had been in the bottom of it. Why should we concern ourselves with what happens over on the other side of the great ocean which it took seven to ten days to cross at that time?

Over in the Pacific the Japanese had been already for 10 years trying to conquer China. They had taken large portions of that land. But again the average American was little interested. Things were going on here. What did we care about what happens in those areas?

Then 40 years ago yesterday morning something happened that exactly fits what is described in this chapter. People were in Hawaii there were the greater part of the American navy was gathered in the harbor there. People were not much concerned. It was good to be there. Nobody would think of attacking this nation across the ocean. Roosevelt was ordering the Japanese to withdraw from what they had taken and not to carry on aggressive warfare anymore but nobody was taking very seriously what he said. They did not realize that the Japanese war-leaders were saying, Suppose the U.S. should get in the war. There's that tremendous navy there in Pearl Harbor and if they were to come over it would be a tremendous injury to us. Can't we creep in there and destroy it; then we'll be safe over here.

Word was sent to the Commander of the navy in Pearl Harbor, and he was told about a week before that he should have things in good shape because there might be some hostile action. U.S. had not seen any hostile action for 20 years. None of it as ~~xxxx~~ near as Hawaii then. Nobody paid much attention to this rather mild warning inserted in the course of other news they had received.