

Leaves of Life

Tree of Life Ministries

Edition 17

The Structure Part 6

Born Again



31 January 2019

“Christians should be preparing for what is soon to break upon the world as an overwhelming surprise, and this preparation they should make by diligently studying the word of God, and striving to conform their lives to its precepts.... **God calls for a revival and a reformation.**

“A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. **To seek this should be our first work**

“**The time has come for a thorough reformation to take place.** When this reformation begins, **the spirit of prayer will actuate every believer,** and will banish from the church the spirit of discord and strife

“A revival and a reformation must take place under the ministration of the Holy Spirit. **Revival and reformation are two different things.** Revival signifies a **renewal of spiritual life,** a quickening of the powers of mind and heart, a **resurrection from spiritual death.** Reformation signifies a **reorganization, a change in ideas and theories, habits and practices.** **Reformation will not bring forth the good fruit of righteousness unless it is connected with the revival of the Spirit.** Revival and reformation are to do their appointed work, and in doing this work **they must blend**

“Do not the Scriptures call for a more pure and holy work than we have yet seen? ... **God calls upon those who are willing to be controlled by the Holy Spirit to lead out in a work of thorough reformation. I see a crisis before us,** and the Lord calls for His laborers to come into line. **Every soul should now stand in a position of deeper, truer consecration to God than during the years that have passed....** I have been deeply impressed by scenes that have recently passed before me in the night season. **There seemed to be a great movement—a work of revival—going forward in many places.** Our people were moving into line, responding to God's call” {*Christian Service, P. 41, par. 42*}

Tree of Life Ministries

Tree of Life Ministries is a self-supporting, non-profit, Seventh-day Adventist ministry, which was officially registered in Germany in 2016. At present, the majority of its members are based in Austria.

Our mission is to prepare Seventh-day Adventists for the soon-coming crisis and to teach the everlasting gospel of the three angels' messages of Revelation 14 through seminars, video productions and written publications. We believe that we are living in the last generation, for whom the entire Bible has been written. Each of the ancient prophets spoke less for their own time than for ours, so that their prophesying is in force for us. The different stories in the Bible typify events that will take place at the end of the world. History will repeat itself. We must study the scriptures "line upon line" in light of their prophetic application to the final generation. This constitutes the "present truth" for this time, which is needed to prepare the church to receive the "latter rain." By understanding the spiritual application of these histories, we are to learn "righteousness by faith."

Leaves of Life is a present truth periodical, which is mainly compiled and edited by Mark Bruce.

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Introduction

In our last edition, we were explaining “the time of the end” and how the historical applications of this prophetic marker, up to 1989, were all types that were prefiguring the Sunday law crisis. Here the light of Revelation 18 would begin to go forward with power, leading up to the message being formalised at the chasm, where the last warning message would be given under the power of “the Midnight Cry,” culminating at Midnight point C, where the door closes upon all those who refused the last warning message.

In this edition, I would like to focus again on the period between Midnight point B, to Midnight point C, to demonstrate how the scriptures reveal the necessity to be spiritually born twice, in order to enter the kingdom of heaven; so that we can understand what this means to us in our walk with Christ. However, before we can understand this fully, we must first go to the type, to Christ, who’s literal birth teaches us about our necessity for a spiritual birth.

The Only Begotten Son

In order for us to be saved, it is important to understand the plan of salvation. If we fail to understand this correctly, then how will it be possible for us to play the part that Christ requires from us, to enable Him to accomplish that work in us? Faith without works is dead (James 2:17). When we understand that the plan of salvation has always existed, that God has always known from eternity past what would come, that the Earth would fall and that He through His Son, Jesus Christ, would implement that plan that existed for ever, it should lead us to really give much thought as to what the Lord has done for us and is willing to do, to save us from the destruction that surely awaits us.

“Christ shows them that, although they might reckon His life to be less than fifty years, yet **His divine life could not be reckoned by human computation**. The existence of Christ **before His incarnation is not measured by figures**.—The Signs of the Times, May 3, 1899.” {*Evangelism, P. 616, par. 1*}

“**The plan of salvation had been laid before the creation of the earth**; for Christ is ‘the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world’ (Revelation 13:8); **yet it was a struggle, even with the King of the universe, to yield up His Son to die for the guilty race**. But ‘God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.’ John 3:16. **Oh, the mystery of redemption!** the love of God for a world that did not love Him! Who can know the depths of that love which ‘passeth knowledge’? **Through endless ages immortal minds, seeking to comprehend the mystery of that incomprehensible love, will wonder and adore.**” {*Patriarchs and Prophets, P. 63, par. 3*}

Let us begin by first understanding why Christ was given the name, “the only begotten Son.” If you go to the Strong’s concordance, it states that the word begotten means to be born.

G3439 (Strong) monogenēs

From G3441 and G1096; **only born**, that is, sole: - only (begotten, child).

However, if we read what both the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy plainly state, we can know for a surety, that Christ is as much God as the Father is God and has been from eternity.

“The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: **Then I was by him, as one brought up with him:** and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him;” (Proverbs 8:22-30)

“The world was made by him, ‘and without him was not anything made that was made.’ If Christ made all things, he existed before all things. The words spoken in regard to this are so decisive that no one need be left in doubt. **Christ was God essentially**, and in the highest sense. **He was with God from all eternity**, God over all, blessed forevermore.” {*Review and Herald, April 5, 1906, par. 6*}

“Jehovah, the eternal, self-existent, uncreated One, Himself the Source and Sustainer of all, is alone entitled to supreme reverence and worship. Man is forbidden to give to any other object the first place in his affections or his service. Whatever we cherish that tends to lessen our love for God or to interfere with the service due Him, of that do we make a god.” {*Patriarchs and Prophets, P. 305, par. 4*}

“Jehovah is the name given to Christ. ‘Behold, God is my salvation,’ writes the prophet Isaiah; **‘I will trust, and not be afraid; for the Lord JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; He also is become my salvation.** Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation. And in that day ye shall say, Praise the Lord, call upon His name, declare His doings among the people, make mention that His name is exalted.’ ‘In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee. **Trust ye in the Lord forever; for in the Lord JEHOVAH is everlasting strength.**” {*Signs of the Times, May 3, 1899, par. 18*}

The only safe deduction one can come to, is that the name given to Him represents a part of the plan of salvation. What do I mean, you may ask? In the Bible Christ has many

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names, such as: Michael, Jesus, Messiah, etc. All these names represent His character, in the sense that they represent a different part that He plays, in His plan to save us. Therefore, “the only Begotten Son,” must represent a title, a name that teaches us something about how we are to be saved. He, being our example in all things, leads us step by step down through the salvation process and this name represents a part of that process, that is applicable to us. In order to prove this, let us now put some facts in place from scripture.

Sister White explains that Christ’s birth was an object lesson for us.

“The birth of a son to Zacharias, like the birth of the child of Abraham, and that of Mary, was to teach a great spiritual truth, a truth that we are slow to learn and ready to forget. In ourselves we are incapable of doing any good thing; but that which we cannot do will be wrought by the power of God in every submissive and believing soul. It was through faith that the child of promise was given. It is through faith that spiritual life is begotten, and we are enabled to do the works of righteousness.” {*Desire of Ages, P. 98, par. 3*}

As we read in the quote above, His birth is a type for our spiritual regeneration, representing the “born again” experience. Let us bring some more evidence together to help us understand this subject.

First point I would like us to see, is that when Christ was born from Mary’s womb, it marks Him being the “firstbegotten,” or “firstborn.”

“He bringeth the firstbegotten into the world.’ This is the incarnation of Christ. In and through Him the Father establishes the kingdom of heaven among men.” {*Manuscript 151-1901*}

However, the “firstborn” is also known as the “firstfruits.”

“And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, **the firstborn from the dead**; that in all things he might have the preeminence.” (Colossians 1:18)

“But now is Christ **risen from the dead**, and become **the firstfruits of them that slept.**” (1Corinthians 15:20)

And we know that Christ being the “firstfruits,” typifies the 144,000 at the end of the world.

“And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song **but the hundred and forty and four thousand**, which were redeemed from the earth. These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, **being the firstfruits unto God** and to the Lamb.” (Revelation 14:3-4)

Therefore, Christ at His birth and at His resurrection, marks the point where Christ becomes the “Only Begotten Son,” fulfilling the title that was given Him before the foundation of the world, that would have been a constant reminder to Him of what was to come and teaching us about our God, who knows all things before they come to pass.

“God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that **he hath raised up Jesus again**; as it is also written in the second psalm, **Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee**. And as concerning that **he raised him up from the dead**, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David.” (Act 13:33-34)

Once we understand that the “firstfruits,” the “firstborn” and the “only begotten Son,” are all synonymous with each other, then it is easy to see that Christ, who is our example in all things, is marking out events for us in prophecy, that are experiences that we must have in order to be saved.

Two Baptisms

Let us now bring these thoughts into the prophetic teachings of Christ and see how He takes the principle of the “only begotten Son” and uses it to illustrate how He will save us.

“Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, **Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.**” (John 3:3)

In a nutshell, Christ is teaching us in this illustration, that we have to be born twice in order to be saved. In Adventist circles, it is taught that the first birth represents our literal birth from our mother’s womb and the second, our spiritual birth by baptism. If you take the principle from 1 Corinthians 15:46, that first comes the natural followed by the spiritual, then you could say that this principle about our first birth being the natural and the second marking baptism, the spiritual, is correct. However, we also know that the Bible interprets itself and we should not try to apply our own understanding of things, rather we should let the Lord teach us, “here a little and there a little.” But, when you look at how Nicodemus answers, you can see that he is clearly representing the mind of Adventism at the end of the World, who do not understand spiritual things.

“Nicodemus saith unto him, **How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?**” (John 3:4)

Nicodemus is interpreting Christ’s words in a literal fashion, meaning that initially, he does not understand that Christ is referring to spiritual births and not our literal birth, which is only an illustration to teach us something spiritual.

Let us now allow Christ to interpret His own words so that there can be no misunderstanding as to what he meant.

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“Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, **Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.**” (John 3:5)

Notice above, Christ states two things, to be baptized by water, but thereafter by the Spirit. Nicodemus begins now to understand. Let us read what He means by this.

“But the Saviour did not meet argument with argument. Raising His hand with solemn, quiet dignity, He pressed the truth home with greater assurance, ‘Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.’ **Nicodemus knew that Christ here referred to water baptism and the renewing of the heart by the Spirit of God.** He was convinced that he was in the presence of the One whom John the Baptist had foretold. *{Desire of Ages, P. 171, par. 5}*

“Jesus, with solemn emphasis, repeated, ‘Verily, verily I say unto thee, Except a man be born of the water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.’ The words of Jesus could no longer be misunderstood. **His listener well knew that he referred to water baptism and the grace of God. The power of the Holy Spirit transforms the entire man. This change constitutes the new birth.**

“Many of the Jews had acknowledged John as a prophet sent of God, **and had received baptism at his hands unto repentance**; meanwhile he had plainly taught them that his work and mission was to prepare the way for **Christ, who was the greater light, and would complete the work which he had begun.** Nicodemus had meditated upon these things, and he now felt convinced that he was in the presence of that One foretold by John.” *{The Spirit of Prophecy, Volume 2, P. 127, 128}*

As we can see above, John represents the first work of water baptism unto repentance, whereas Christ is the one who will then finish the work that John had begun. When we also read what John says, he emphasises that he does the work of water baptism and that Christ, who comes after him, will baptize with the Spirit.

“**I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance**: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: **he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:**” (Matthew 3:11)

The two points to notice here are “I” and “He,” the first one referring to the work of John, the second referring to the work of Christ. If we remember back to Early Writings 259-261, Sister White likens the work of John to the first Angels message and the work of Christ to the second. Therefore, the first baptism is the work of the first Angels message, which is a conviction of sin unto repentance, the second baptism represents the work of the second Angels message, which is the message of His righteousness, that prepares us for the latter rain. Therefore, the two births represent two baptisms, teaching us that the first baptism by water, is not sufficient of its own to save us, we must also have this baptism of fire.

However, I think there is something deeper we have to notice here. When Christ was baptized by water, He was also baptized by the Spirit.

“And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” (Matthew 3:16-17)

Notice when this happens the Father calls Him His son, marking the fulfillment of being the “only begotten Son.” He was not only baptized by the Spirit, but He also received a full measure of the Spirit.

“For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: **for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him.” (John 3:34)**

There is obviously a purpose for this that we need to understand, which will become clearer later in this study. For the moment at least, I would like us to understand that there are several things that we are to learn from this. Firstly, that the water baptism and the baptism by the Holy Spirit with fire are speaking about two separate events; the first one by John and the finishing work by Christ, representing two births. Whereas on the other hand, Christ wants us to see that both aspects (Water and Spirit) take place during each baptism.

Let me now give you a witness for both of these thoughts. In the first illustration, we see that these “disciples,” who the apostle Paul met, that although they had been baptized under John, they had not received the Holy spirit. It wasn’t until they had been baptized in the name of Jesus that the Spirit came upon them.

“And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, He said unto them, **Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, **We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.** And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, **John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.” (Acts 19:1-6)****

Where else do we see the Holy Ghost come upon God’s people, where they prophesy in tongues? At Pentecost!

“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And **there appeared unto them cloven**

tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And **they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues**, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” (Act 2:1-4)

Keep this in mind, it will become more apparent as we go through this study.

In the next illustration however, Sister White explains to us that water baptism is the new birth experience.

“Every believer in Christ is to manifest to a sinful world all that these words imply. He should remember his solemn baptismal vows. **In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, he was buried with his Lord in baptism**, signifying that henceforth he would be dead unto the world. **His resurrection from the watery grave was symbolic of the new birth** that took place at the time of his conversion.” {*Manuscript 68-1903, par. 11*}

There is a principle, that we cannot make one portion of scripture to overrule another, for all scripture must agree.

“...**One saying of the Saviour must not be made to destroy another...**” {*The Great Controversy, P. 370, par. 2*}

We therefore, must allow these thoughts to harmonise with one another.

Let us now look at what the baptism of fire is, that Christ said that they would have to endure.

“This was the joy that was set before Christ, the glory that he was to receive, and that the two disciples had unwittingly requested to share. Jesus asked them, ‘**Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?**’ Little did they comprehend **the bitter cup** of which their Lord spoke, or realize **the fiery baptism**; but they fearlessly responded, “We are able.” Jesus said unto them, “Ye shall indeed drink of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with; but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.” {*Signs of the Times, January 15, 1885, par. 7*}

Christ likens the baptism that they were to be baptized with, to the drinking of a cup. It is clear to understand that the drinking of that cup, which represents His baptism by fire is the cross.

“He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, **if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.**” (Matthew 26:42)

“Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: **the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?**” (Joh 18:11)

This cup, just as he stated to His disciples is the cup that we must drink at the end of the world, it is the fiery trial that we must go through to cross the chasm.

“By transgression man was severed from God, the communion between them was broken; **but Jesus Christ died upon the cross of Calvary**, bearing in His body the sins of the whole world, **and the gulf between heaven and earth was bridged by that cross**. Christ leads men to the gulf, and points to the bridge by which it is spanned, saying, “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and **take up his cross daily, and follow me**” (Manuscript 21, 1895). 7BC 941.8

We know from scripture that it was this trial that made Christ perfect.

“For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation **perfect through sufferings.**” (Hebrews 2:10)

Therefore, as He is our example, it is also necessary for us to follow Him to Calvary, that we, like Him, may be made perfect through sufferings.

“No cross, no crown! How can one be strong in the Lord without trials? To have strength, we must have exercise. To have strong faith, **we must be placed in circumstances where our faith will be tried.** The apostle Paul, just before his martyrdom, exhorted Timothy, ‘Be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God.’ [2 Timothy 1:8.] **It is through much tribulation that we are to enter the kingdom.** Our Saviour was tried in every possible way, and yet he triumphed in God continually. It is our privilege to be strong in the strength of God under all circumstances, and **to glory in the cross of Christ.**” {*Gospel Workers 92, P. 372, par. 2*}

Peter also emphasises this necessity to be tried.

“Forasmuch then **as Christ hath suffered for us** in the flesh, arm yourselves **likewise** with the same mind: **for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;**” (1Peter 4:1)

“Beloved, **think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you**, as though **some strange thing happened unto you**: But rejoice, inasmuch as **ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings**; that, **when his glory shall be revealed**, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.” (1Peter 4:12-13)

We can see that as Christ went through the suffering of the Cross to be made perfect, we must likewise go through the same fiery baptism to be complete in Christ Jesus. As it states above, “no cross, no crown!”

It is simple to see, that when Christ gave this statement to Nicodemus, He was in fact speaking to His people at the end of the world, of whom, many will deny the necessity to go to the cross, even though He states this very clearly.

Our Example

“**C**hrist is our example in all things.” {*Evangelism, P. 378, par. 2*}

If Christ is our example in all things, He must have likewise gone through both baptism's. Do we see that in scripture?

“Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, **to be baptized of him**. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, **Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness**. Then he suffered him.” (Matthew 3:13-15)

From the information we have gathered so far, we can see that these two births Christ was referring to, were undertaken by Him “to fulfil all righteousness,” as it is written.

The next question we should ask ourselves is what does baptism represent?

“**Buried with him in baptism**, wherein **also ye are risen** with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.” (Collosians 2:12)

The Bible explains to us that it represents a spiritual death and resurrection that is a parallel to Him when He was raised up after the cross.

“The resurrection of Christ is commemorated by our being **buried with Him by baptism, and raised out of the watery grave, in likeness of His resurrection**, to live in newness of life.” {*Early Writings, p. 217, par. 1*}

Therefore, we can see that these two births, which are two baptisms are both a representation of a spiritual death to self and to be raised up in Christ. But on a bigger scale, the first one is not sufficient of itself, we must be “born again.”

Divinity and Humanity

The next thing I would like to highlight is, what happened when Christ was baptized by water?

“Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that **Jesus also being baptized**, and praying, the heaven was opened, And **the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him**, and a voice came from heaven, which said, **Thou art my beloved Son**; in thee I am well pleased.” (Luke 3:21-22)

Humanity and divinity combined. Christ was receiving the Holy Spirit in order to fit Him up for His mission, He was giving us an object lesson for our benefit so that we might understand our need to be fitted up for our mission, to emulate His work of saving souls.

When the Son of God received baptism in the river Jordan, “the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him,” and a voice, richer than any music that ever fell on mortal ear, came from the excellent glory declaring, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” **Did the voice of God come alone for the sake of Christ?—No; it came in behalf of the humanity that he represented.** It came to assure man that he could be accepted in the beloved. Heaven was opened by the prayer of Christ, and it was opened for all who would come unto God by him. **Thus divine power is given that it may be combined with human effort.** ST June 17, 1889, par. 10

The Incarnation

What I would like us to understand from this, is that these two baptism’s are symbolising two anointings of the Holy Spirit, in order to aid us in the work set before us. When we partake of these anointings, it is a symbol of the new birth experience. This was typified as we read earlier by Christ at His birth, which is an illustration of the incarnation.

“He bringeth the firstbegotten into the world.’ This is the incarnation of Christ. In and through Him the Father establishes the kingdom of heaven among men.” {*Manuscript 151-1901*}

The incarnation is merely another word for the combination of divinity and humanity.

“The incarnation of Christ has ever been, and will ever remain a mystery. That which is revealed, is for us and for our children, but let every human being be warned from the ground of making Christ altogether human, such an one as ourselves; for it cannot be. **The exact time when humanity blended with divinity, it is not necessary for us to know.** We are to keep our feet on the Rock Christ Jesus, as God revealed in humanity.” {*SDA Bible Commentary, Volume 5, P. 1128, par. 6*}

This is what happened to Christ at His birth, humanity and divinity combined. It is an allegory for us to understand, which will become more apparent as we go through this study.

He who was **by birth a human being, though allied to divinity.** He has passed over the road we are to tread, and He says, “Without Me ye can do nothing.” But with Him we can do everything. **Thus a perfect character can be obtained.** God never issues a command without furnishing the grace sufficient for its fulfilment. Ample provision has been made that man shall be a partaker of the divine nature. ST July 26, 1899, par. 1

It also explains to us that the incarnation represents the “mystery of godliness,” which is “Christ in you the hope of glory.”

“The incarnation of Jesus Christ, the divine son of God, ‘Christ in you, the hope of glory,’ is the great theme of the gospel. ‘In Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in Him.’ Colossians 1:27; 2:9, 10. **The acceptance or rejection of this vital truth is one of the divinely appointed tests of one who claims to have the gift of prophecy.” {*Christian Experience and Teachings, P. 246, par.1*}**

Let us try and collate our thoughts now so that we can bring all of this together. We began by understanding the necessity in our Christian walk to be born twice, once by water and the other by the Holy Ghost and with fire, which Christ stated was the fiery trial of the cross. However, we also saw that the second birth, in which Christ would baptise us with fire, illustrated Pentecost. And as we read, the birth or baptism, marks the point where humanity and divinity is combined, where we are incarnated with the Holy Spirit, to walk in newness of life.

Let us now bring this onto the prophetic model, so that we can better understand what these types mean for us.

Two Temple Cleansings

As we have come to understand, Sister White parallels the two temple cleansings with Revelation 18:1-3 and Revelation 18:4,5, which are two voices, or messages, that are given with power under the third Angel’s message.

“The Revelator says, ‘**I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen’ [Revelation 18:1, 2]. **This is the same message that was given by the second angel**—Babylon is fallen, ‘because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication’ [Revelation 14:8]. What is that wine? Her false doctrines. She has given to the world a false sabbath instead of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, and has repeated the lie Satan first told to Eve in Eden—the natural immortality of the soul. Many kindred errors she has spread far and wide, “teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.”**

“When Jesus began His public ministry, He cleansed the temple from its sacrilegious profanation. Almost the last act of His ministry was to cleanse the temple again. **So in the last work for the warning of the world, two distinct calls are made to the churches: The second angel's message**, and the voice heard in heaven, ‘**Come out of her, My people....** For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities’ [Revelation 18:4, 5].” {*Manuscript Releases, Volume 2, P. 228, par. 1, 2*}

When you understand that the temple is an illustration of us, then the temple cleansing is none other than an allegory to teach us something about how Christ is going to cleanse us from sin, through a combination of the human with the divine.

“In the cleansing of the temple, Jesus was announcing His mission as the Messiah, and **entering upon His work. That temple, erected for the abode of the divine Presence, was designed to be an object lesson for Israel and for the world.** From eternal ages it was God's purpose that every created being, from the bright and holy seraph to man, **should be a temple for the indwelling of the Creator.** Because of sin, humanity ceased to be a temple for God. Darkened and defiled by evil, the heart of man no longer revealed the glory of the Divine One. **But by the incarnation of the Son of God, the purpose of Heaven is fulfilled. God dwells in humanity, and through saving grace the heart of man becomes again His temple...**” {*Desire of Ages, P. 161, par. 1*}

The temple cleansing as we just read, typifies the incarnation of humanity with divinity. Let us continue to read, to give more weight to this thought.

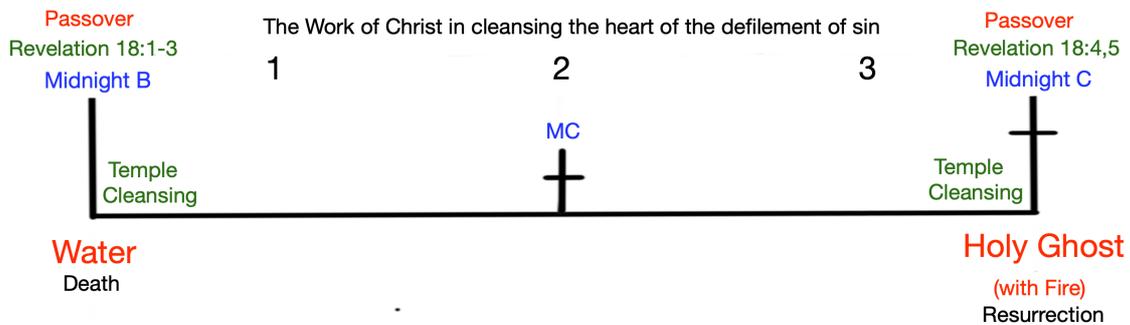
“The confusion is hushed. The sound of traffic and bargaining has ceased. The silence becomes painful. A sense of awe overpowers the assembly. It is as if they were arraigned before **the tribunal of God** to answer for their deeds. **Looking upon Christ, they behold divinity flash through the garb of humanity.** The Majesty of heaven stands **as the Judge will stand at the last day,**—not now encircled with the glory that will then attend Him, but with the same power to read the soul. His eye sweeps over the multitude, taking in every individual. His form seems to rise above them in commanding dignity, and a divine light illuminates His countenance. He speaks, and His clear, ringing voice—**the same that upon Mount Sinai proclaimed the law** that priests and rulers are transgressing—is heard echoing through the arches of the temple: **‘Take these things hence; make not My Father's house an house of merchandise.’**” {*Desire of Ages, P. 158, par. 1*}

Therefore, the two temple cleansings, which are represented by the two messages of Revelation 18, are marking two births, or two times where God's people are incarnated with God's Spirit. Once at the beginning and once at the end. However, in reality it is one work from beginning to end, from birth to birth, as we can read.

“**...The courts of the temple at Jerusalem, filled with the tumult of unholy traffic, represented all too truly the temple of the heart, defiled by the presence of sensual passion and unholy thoughts. In cleansing the temple from the world's buyers and sellers, Jesus announced His mission to cleanse the heart from the defilement of sin,**—from the earthly desires, the selfish lusts, the evil habits, that corrupt the soul. **‘The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple,** even the Messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, He shall come, saith the Lord of hosts. But who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth? for He is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: and **He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver.’** Malachi 3:1-3.” {*Desire of Ages, P. 161, par. 1*}

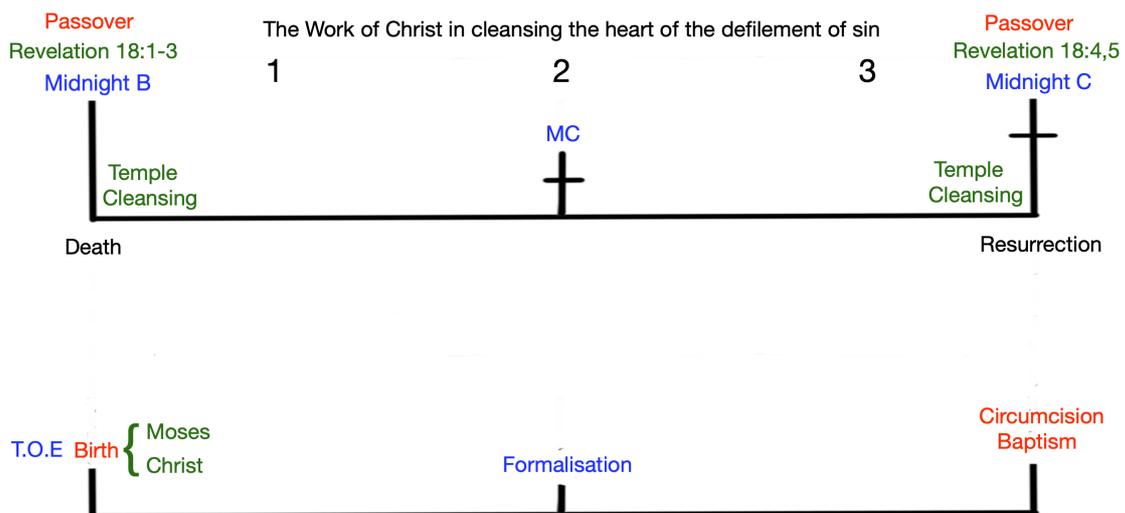
Christ’s mission went for three years from temple cleansing to temple cleansing, or from Passover to Passover.

Let us place this upon our structure in the binding off, so that we can see what the Lord requires from us to understand from this.



As we have shown in other presentations, Midnight C is both the cross and Pentecost, line upon line, therefore demonstrating to us how that the birth by the Holy Ghost and by fire is symbolised by both these events.

So far in our study, we have come to understand that the birth, the baptism, the temple cleansing, the cross and Pentecost, are all illustrations of the incarnation, the combination of the human with the divine, which are representations of a death and resurrection. Therefore, what I would like to show is how this fits and agrees with other illustrations that we have already put in place. Let us now look at the same diagram with some other lines placed parallel and see how all these aforementioned illustrations agree with the layout of the binding off.



In our illustration above we have laid “the time of the end” to the “empowerment” of the message (Revelation 18:1-3), using both Moses and Christ’s line to illustrate these

two births. The time of the end in both of these lines is illustrated by a birth. As we already studied, a birth represents the combination of the human and the divine, as does baptism and circumcision, which both represent a death and resurrection. We can see that at the large level, the first birth represents our death and the second our resurrection, but at the smaller level they both represent a death and resurrection. Let us try now to understand why the Lord wants us to see this.

The Water Baptism

Let us begin by understanding the two births at the smaller level. As is stated in the SOP, the two temple cleansings represent the two calls of Revelation 18. These messages, one which is marked at the beginning (Alpha) of Christ's ministry and the other, at the end (Omega) of His ministry, are illustrating two places where the Lord combines humanity with divinity. This can also be represented, when the messengers and the message are united. Once we understand this from a prophetic standpoint, the next thing we should ask ourselves is, what does this mean for us personally? The answer I believe is found in the sanctuary service.

"Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary: who is so great a God as our God?" (Psalm 77:13)

In the plan of salvation, the very first requirement for us to be able to walk with Christ is to be convicted of our sins. We know that this takes place when the truth is presented to us, when we come face to face with God's law and see that our moral standard falls short of His glory.

"And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:" (John 16:8)

When this takes place, we are faced with the decision to obey or to face judgment; there are only two options. God's word states that we can do nothing in our own strength, our hearts are naturally evil.

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jeremiah 17:9)

"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." (John 15:5)

It is impossible for us, of ourselves, to escape from the pit of sin in which we are sunken. Our hearts are evil, and we cannot change them. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one." "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Job 14:4; Romans 8:7. Education, culture, **the exercise of the will, human effort, all have their proper sphere**, but here they are powerless. They may produce an outward correctness of behavior, **but they cannot change**

the heart; they cannot purify the springs of life. **There must be a power working from within, a new life from above, before men can be changed from sin to holiness.** That power is Christ. His grace alone can quicken the lifeless faculties of the soul, and attract it to God, to holiness. {*Steps to Christ, P. 18, par. 1*}

That power from above is prophetically speaking our first baptism. Even Christ Himself, who was baptized at the beginning of His ministry, knew that He had to go to the cross to be perfected.

“But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels **for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour;** that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, **to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one:** for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,” (Hebrews 2:9-11)

Therefore, when Christ told John to baptise Him to fulfill all righteousness, he was laying out the plan of salvation, the same plan that He thereafter explained to Nicodemus.

“Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, **Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit,** he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” (John 3:5)

So, although Christ, who received the Spirit at the beginning of His ministry, marking this “New birth,” which is the combination of humanity with divinity, that enabled Him to do the work set before Him, He also knew, that in order to enter the heavenly realms, we would also have to receive the baptism by fire. Hence, in the verses quoted above, is stated, “**For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one,**” teaching us the lesson, that unless we likewise go to the cross, we will in no way enter into the kingdom.

When someone in their Christian walk renounces sin, it is the beginning of their experience, not their end. In the sanctuary service, when someone comes from the world and renounces sin, their sins are not blotted out, instead, power is given to overcome Satan’s temptations by faith, where we begin to learn to walk with Christ, trusting in His providence and promises.

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: **for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth;** to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.” (Romans 1:16)

When we agree to be baptized by water, we are in effect entering into a covenant with God, who promises that if we are faithful to Him, he will save us. He gives us all that is necessary by faith, to walk according to His law and keep His commandments daily, we only fail because we lack faith. It is something that has to be exercised through prayer and by many trials, in order to bring us to a point, where we bring under subjection our natural

tendencies to do wrong. This can only happen through a continual feeding upon His word, to cleanse us from sin as it is revealed to us.

“Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.” (John 17:17)

“Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.” (James 1:21)

“The law is an expression of God’s idea. When we receive it in Christ, it becomes our idea. It lifts us above the power of natural desires and tendencies, above temptations that lead to sin. ‘Great peace have they that love thy law; and nothing shall offend them,’—cause them to stumble.” {Letter 96-1896, par. 7}

“Paul was in such constant dread, lest his evil propensities should get the better of him, that he was constantly battling, with firm resistance, unruly appetites and passions. If the great apostle felt like trembling in view of his weakness, who has a right to feel self-confident and boastful? The moment we begin to feel self-sufficient and confident then we are in danger of a disgraceful failure.” {Letter 52-1874, par. 5}

This is the work that we are to do now in preparation for our final test, yet without Christ baptizing us with His Spirit, we would have no power to obtain the victory over every besetment of sin prior to that time. Therefore, there is a need for all Christians to have the new birth experience at the beginning of their walk with Christ, which is a foretaste of the birth that they must have at the end, which is a completion of His work in them.

The Fiery Baptism

As we have already discussed, the fiery baptism is a representation of both the cross and the reception of the latter rain. Let us now demonstrate how we are to experience that, so that we can indeed make the necessary preparations. Firstly, let us look at our final test and allow God’s word to bring certain thoughts together.

“...The Lord has shown me clearly that the image of the beast will be formed before probation closes; for it is to be the great test for the people of God, by which their eternal destiny will be decided...

“In Revelation 13 this subject is plainly presented; [Revelation 13:11-17, quoted].

“This is the test that the people of God must have before they are sealed. All who prove their loyalty to God by observing His law, and refusing to accept a spurious sabbath, will rank under the banner of the Lord God Jehovah, and **will receive the seal of the living God.** Those who yield the truth of heavenly origin, and accept the Sunday sabbath, **will receive the mark of the beast...** {Manuscript Releases, Volume 15, P. 15, par. 1-3}

It explains to us that the great test is found in Revelation 13:11-17. Let us read those verses so that they help us to place this correctly upon our line.

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“And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and **he spake as a dragon.**” (Revelation 13:11)

As we have already demonstrated in earlier editions, the test begins at Midnight point B when the USA speaks like a Dragon and makes a Sunday Law, forcing the conscience to worship a day of human devising. In the following quote we can find more information on this subject.

“I saw that the two-horned beast had a dragon's mouth, and that his power was in his head, and that the decree would go out of his mouth. Then I saw the Mother of Harlots; that the mother was not the daughters, but separate and distinct from them. She has had her day, and it is past, and her daughters, the Protestant sects, were the next to come on the stage and act out the same mind that the mother had when she persecuted the saints. I saw that as the mother has been declining in power, the daughters had been growing, and **soon they will exercise the power once exercised by the mother.**” {*Spalding and Megane, P. 1, par. 4*}

“And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he **doeth great wonders**, so that **he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men**, And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.” (Revelation 13:12-14)

During the first test of Job in Chapter 1, Satan brings four events upon Job, which are a parallel to the four abominations in Ezekiel 8. In one of those events he brings down fire from heaven as mentioned in the above quote. The fourth event, where the house collapses, marks the last test that begins at the chasm, where “the Man of Sin” reveals himself. However, in Job’s second test, he faces death, marking the death decree for all those who refuse to bow down or be deceived under the first test.

“I saw the nominal church and nominal Adventists, like Judas, would betray us to the Catholics to obtain their influence to come against the truth. The saints then will be an obscure people, little known to the Catholics; but the churches and nominal Adventists who know of our faith and customs (for **they hated us on account of the Sabbath, for they could not refute it**) **will betray the saints and report them to the Catholics** as those who disregard the institutions of the people; that is, that **they keep the Sabbath and disregard Sunday.**

“Then the Catholics bid the Protestants to go forward, and issue a decree that all who will not observe the first day of the week, instead of the seventh day, **shall be slain. And the Catholics, whose numbers are large, will stand by the Protestants. **The Catholics will give their power to the image of the beast.** And the Protestants will work as their mother worked before them to destroy the saints...” {*Spalding and Megane, P. 1,2*}**

“And **he had power to give life unto the image of the beast**, that the image of the beast **should both speak, and cause** that as many as would not worship the image of the beast **should be killed**. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And **that no man might buy or sell**, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.” (Revelation 13:12-17)

This death decree is the final test. In the vision of “Travelling the Narrow Way,” when they came to the chasm, Sister White stated: “Should we fail here, all the difficulties of our journey had been experienced for nought.” *{Christian Experience and Teachings, P. 183, par. 1}* It is the end of the path for all of us, if we do not prepare for this time which is coming there will be no second chance, this is our fiery trial and the time to prepare is now.

“**It is in a crisis that character is revealed**. When the earnest voice proclaimed at **midnight**, “Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him,” and the sleeping virgins were roused from their slumbers, **it was seen who had made preparation for the event**. Both parties were taken unawares; but one was prepared for the emergency, and the other was found without preparation. So now, a sudden and unlooked-for calamity, **something that brings the soul face to face with death**, will show whether there is any real faith in the promises of God. It will show whether the soul is sustained by grace. **The great final test comes at the close of human probation, when it will be too late for the soul's need to be supplied.**” *{Christ's Object Lessons, P. 412, par. 1}*

Let us now bring other scriptures and quotes into play to show how this is the second birth experience to which Christ referred.

The Sign of Jonah

Iwould now like to bring in another train of thought to add to what we have already considered. When the Jews asked for a sign, Christ told them that the only sign He was willing to give them was one that they should have already recognized. If all the prophets are speaking about the end of the world, then all the signs in the Bible are speaking about the same thing. I want to now show that the sign that they should have already seen was the birth marked at point B, which was a sign marking for them “The time of the end.”

“Therefore **the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son**, and shall call his name Immanuel.” (Isaiah 7:14)

As we know, Midnight point B marks the first temple cleansing, which like the Birth of Christ, also represents the combination of divinity and humanity at work. Therefore, just like the leaders did not comprehend the sign at the time of Christ's birth, they also did not comprehend the same sign when He cleansed the temple for the first time. This sign that

they should have already seen was the incarnation of the human and the divine. However, Nicodemus saw this sign and it was this which convicted him to speak to Christ.

“Christ's exercise of authority in the cleansing of the temple had roused the determined hatred of the priests and rulers. **They feared the power of this stranger.** Such boldness on the part of an obscure Galilean was not to be tolerated. They were bent on putting an end to His work. **But not all were agreed in this purpose. There were some that feared to oppose One who was so evidently moved upon by the Spirit of God.** They remembered how prophets had been slain for rebuking the sins of the leaders in Israel. They knew that the bondage of the Jews to a heathen nation was the result of their stubbornness in rejecting reproofs from God. They feared that in plotting against Jesus the priests and rulers were following in the steps of their fathers, and would bring fresh calamities upon the nation. **Nicodemus shared these feelings.** In a council of the Sanhedrin, when the course to be pursued toward Jesus was considered, Nicodemus advised caution and moderation. **He urged that if Jesus was really invested with authority from God, it would be perilous to reject His warnings.** The priests dared not disregard this counsel, and for the time they took no open measures against the Saviour.

“**Since hearing Jesus, Nicodemus had anxiously studied the prophecies relating to the Messiah; and the more he searched, the stronger was his conviction that this was the One who was to come.** With many others in Israel he had been greatly distressed by the profanation of the temple. **He was a witness of the scene** when Jesus drove out the buyers and the sellers; **he beheld the wonderful manifestation of divine power;** he saw the Saviour receiving the poor and **healing the sick;** he saw their looks of joy, and heard their words of praise; and **he could not doubt that Jesus of Nazareth was the Sent of God.**”
{*Desire of Ages, P. 167, 168*}

Nicodemus, like John at Christ's baptism, recognized the sign, unlike the leaders, who would not be convinced, no matter how strong the evidence that had been given. Instead they asked for a sign.

“Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, **Master, we would see a sign from thee.** But he answered and said unto them, **An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas:** For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.” (Matthew 12:38-41)

Christ had already given them a sign. The life He led, healing people and teaching in the power of the Spirit was a clear sign of the combination of the human with the divine that had taken place at His Birth, His Baptism and the first temple cleansing, that all prophetically point to Midnight point B, yet they asked for a sign.

“And He sighed deeply in His spirit, and saith, **Why doth this generation seek after a sign?** ‘There shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas.’ **As Jonah**

was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, Christ was to be the same time 'in the heart of the earth.' **And as the preaching of Jonah was a sign to the Ninevites, so Christ's preaching was a sign to His generation.** But what a contrast in the reception of the word! **The people of the great heathen city trembled as they heard the warning from God. Kings and nobles humbled themselves;** the high and the lowly together cried to the God of heaven, and His mercy was granted unto them. 'The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation,' Christ had said, 'and shall condemn it: **because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.**' Matthew 12:40, 41.

"Every miracle that Christ performed was a sign of His divinity. He was doing the very work that had been foretold of the Messiah; but to the Pharisees these works of mercy were a positive offense. The Jewish leaders looked with heartless indifference on human suffering. **In many cases their selfishness and oppression had caused the affliction that Christ relieved.** Thus His miracles were to them a reproach.

"That which led the Jews to reject the Saviour's work was the highest evidence of His divine character. The greatest significance of His miracles is seen in the fact that they were for the blessing of humanity. **The highest evidence that He came from God is that His life revealed the character of God. He did the works and spoke the words of God. Such a life is the greatest of all miracles.**" {*Desire of Ages, P. 406, P. 3-5*}

Christ is a longsuffering and merciful God, He came to save and not to destroy. Not until the greatest evidence is given us will our door of mercy be shut. Therefore, He points forward to the Cross experience, from the Chasm to Midnight C, this is the last warning message, which He parallels with Jonah being in the belly of the whale for three days.

When you go to the book of Jeremiah the belly is likened unto the womb.

"Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations." (Jeremiah 1:5)

In the reform lines the chasm is paralleled to the point where the prophet is being raised up, marking the people who will give the last warning message, typified by the Midnight Cry. We can see from the above verse that it illustrates the sanctifying experience that will cleanse us of all our sin. This is the sign that Christ will give and all those who reject it are representing Satan, as illustrated by Peter, who denied that His Lord needed to go through this experience.

"From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, **Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee.** But he turned, and said unto Peter, **Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me:** for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." (Matthew 16:21-23)

From this you can see that these three days, from the chasm, marked by the death of Christ, to Point C, where He is resurrected, is marking the new birth experience, or a baptism. Christ also likens this experience to a birth.

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world.” (John 16:20-21)

This is also a parallel to the point in Revelation 11, where the “Two Witnesses” are put to death and the world rejoices over them.

“And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies **three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. And **they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry**, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth. **And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them.**”** (Revelation 11:7-11)

This represents the baptism by fire and by the spirit. At the chasm, when faced with death we go through the baptism by fire, to purify us of our dross. However, at the end of the experience we are baptized by the spirit, where we stand upon our feet, “an exceeding great army.” (Ezekiel 37:10, 12). Hence Christ likens it unto being born of the Spirit.

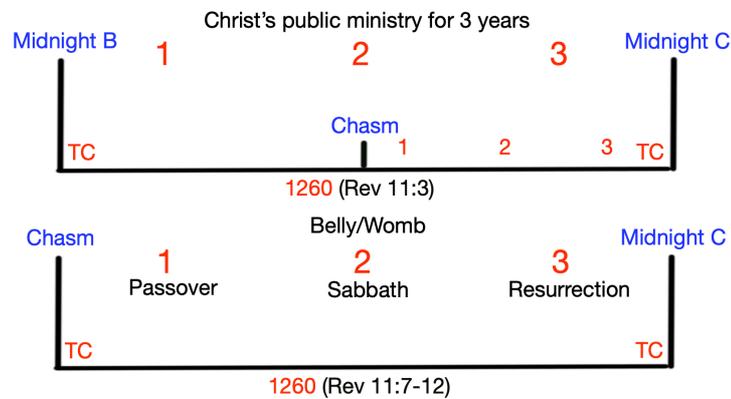
“That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: **so is every one that is born of the Spirit.”** (John 3:4-8)

Let us now put this onto our line, so that we can see all these things as one event and allow the Lord to enlighten our minds. I have displayed the diagram into two fractals to allow us to see the repeating pattern that the “Pattern Man” requires us to see.

“His temptation and victory tell us that **humanity must copy the Pattern; man must become a partaker of the divine nature.”** *{Selected Messages, Book 1, P. 408, par. 1}*

“...He is the author and finisher of our faith. He is the pattern Man. His experience is the measure of the experience that we are to gain. His character is our model. Let us, then, take our minds off the perplexities and the difficulties of this life, and fix them on him, that **by beholding we may be changed into his likeness. We may behold Christ to**

good purpose. We may safely look to him; for he is all-wise. **As we look to him and think of him, he will be formed within, the hope of glory.**" {*The Review and Herald, March 9, 1905, par. 3*}



As we can see, Christ is trying to show us that the new birth experience is not something that takes place in one moment, it is a progressive work from beginning to end. However, Christ being the Alpha and Omega, demonstrates this necessary experience at both the beginning and the end. In the vision of Joshua the High Priest, given to Zechariah, we can see an illustration of Christ finalising the work in His people. This represents the baptism by fire, where God’s people are tested whether or not they believe the promises of God.

Three Changes

“In vision the prophet beholds ‘Joshua the high priest,’ ‘clothed with filthy garments’ (Zechariah 3:1, 3), standing before the Angel of the Lord, entreating God's mercy in behalf of His afflicted people. As he pleads for the fulfillment of God's promises, Satan stands up boldly to resist him. He points to the transgressions of Israel as a reason why they should not be restored to the favor of God. He claims them as his prey, and demands that they be given into his hands.

“The high priest cannot defend himself or his people from Satan's accusations. He does not claim that Israel is free from fault. **In filthy garments, symbolizing the sins of the people, which he bears as their representative, he stands before the Angel, confessing their guilt, yet pointing to their repentance and humiliation, and relying upon the mercy of a sin-pardoning Redeemer. In faith he claims the promises of God.**

“Then the Angel, who is Christ Himself, the Saviour of sinners, puts to silence the accuser of His people, declaring, ‘**The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan**; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?’ Verse 2. Long had Israel remained in the furnace of affliction. **Because of their sins they had been well-nigh consumed in the flame kindled by Satan and his agents for their destruction**, but God had now set His hand to bring them forth.” {*Prophets and Kings, P. 583, 584*}

This is a representation of the trial that God’s people are brought into at the chasm.

“Zechariah's vision of Joshua and the Angel applies with peculiar force to the experience of God's people in the closing scenes of the great day of atonement. The remnant church will then be brought into **great trial and distress. Those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus **will feel the ire of the dragon** and his hosts. Satan numbers the world as his subjects; he has gained control even of many professing Christians. **But here is a little company who are resisting his supremacy**. If he could blot them from the earth, his triumph would be complete. As he influenced the heathen nations to destroy Israel, **so in the near future he will stir up the wicked powers of earth to destroy the people of God. Men will be required to render obedience to human edicts in violation of the divine law.**” {*Prophets and Kings, P. 587, para. 2*}**

“As the people of God afflict their souls before Him, pleading for purity of heart, the command is given, ‘Take away the filthy garments,’ and the encouraging words are spoken, ‘Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.’ Zechariah 3:4. The spotless robe of Christ's righteousness is placed upon the tried, tempted, faithful children of God. The despised remnant are clothed in glorious apparel, nevermore to be defiled by the corruptions of the world. **Their names are retained in the Lamb's book of life, enrolled among the faithful of all ages.** They have resisted the wiles of the deceiver; they have not been turned from their loyalty by the dragon's roar. **Now they are eternally secure from the tempter's devices.** Their sins are transferred to the originator of sin. **A ‘fair miter’ is set upon their heads.**

“While Satan has been urging his accusations, holy angels, unseen, have been passing to and fro, **placing upon the faithful ones the seal of the living God**. These are they that stand upon Mount Zion with the Lamb, having the Father's name written in their foreheads. They sing the new song before the throne, that song which no man can learn save the hundred and forty and four thousand which were redeemed from the earth. ‘These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.’ Revelation 14:4, 5.” {*Prophets and Kings, P. 591, par. 1, 2*}

Notice at the end of the experience, which marks the point where they have passed the test and received the Seal of God, the Lord commands that three things are done. Firstly, their sins are blotted out. Secondly, they are given the eternal robe of righteousness and lastly, they receive the crown of life. These three points are done at the end of the experience. In a moment we will place this on our line, but first let us give another two illustrations of the same event. This can be found in a vision by William Foy.

“This shining one, took me by my right hand, and led me upon the bank of a river; in the midst was a mount of pure water. Upon the bank, I beheld a multitude, both great and small; they were the living inhabitants of the earth. Soon all moved towards the west, walking on the water, until we reached the mount. **This became the separating line between the righteous and the wicked. The righteous crossed it, passed through three changes**; 1st. their **bodies were made glorious**. 2nd, they received **pure and shining**

garments. 3rd, **bright crowns** were given them.” {*The Christian Experience of William E Foy, P. 9. par. 2*}

In the above vision, William Foy marks the point where they cross, “the separating line between the righteous and the wicked.” This marks the test upon the Sabbath.

“Whoever obeys the fourth commandment will find **that a separating line is drawn between him and the world**. The Sabbath is a test, not a human requirement, but God's test. **It is that which will distinguish between those who serve God and those who serve him not**; and upon this point will come **the last great conflict** of the controversy between truth and error.” {*Counsels for the Church, P. 268, par. 2*}

Those who cross this point, which parallels the chasm experience, will then go through three changes, before entering into the plain of paradise. This, which is easy to see, is a representation of the glorious meadow, illustrated in the vision of the narrow way.

“But when the wicked reached the spot where the righteous were changed, they cried for mercy, and sank beneath the mount. **The saints then passed on to a boundless plain, having the appearance like pure silver**. Our guide then spake and said, **This is the plain of Paradise.**” {*The Christian Experience of William E Foy, P. 9. par. 3*}

“Before us, **on the other side of the chasm, was a beautiful field of green grass**, about six inches high. I could not see the sun, but bright soft beams of light, resembling **fine gold and silver**, were resting upon this field. **Nothing I had seen upon earth could compare in beauty and glory with this field**. But could we succeed in reaching it? was the anxious inquiry...” {*Christian Experience and Teachings, P.183, par. 2*}

The last witness I want to give for this, before summarising our study, is where Daniel is touched three times at the end of his three weeks of fasting. Daniel goes before the King, marking the Chasm, where he informs him from the Bible that the God of heaven had written of him, long before he was even born and showed him the work that he would do in delivering God's people from Babylon. Although the King initially agrees to allow God's people to return to Jerusalem, he is thereafter tempted by Satan not to keep his word and Daniel enters into his fast to entreat the God of heaven.

“The deliverance of Daniel from the den of lions had been used of God to create a favorable impression upon the mind of Cyrus the Great. The sterling qualities of the man of God as a statesman of farseeing ability led the Persian ruler to show him marked respect and to honor his judgment. **And now, just at the time God had said He would cause His temple at Jerusalem to be rebuilt, He moved upon Cyrus as His agent to discern the prophecies concerning himself, with which Daniel was so familiar, and to grant the Jewish people their liberty.**

“As the king saw the words foretelling, more than a hundred years before his birth, the manner in which Babylon should be taken; as he read the message addressed to him by the Ruler of the universe, ‘I girded thee, though thou hast not known Me: that

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they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside Me;’ as he saw before his eyes the declaration of the eternal God, ‘For Jacob My servant’s sake, and Israel Mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known Me;’ as he traced the inspired record, ‘I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways: he shall build My city, and he shall let go My captives, not for price nor reward,’ **his heart was profoundly moved, and he determined to fulfill his divinely appointed mission.** Isaiah 45:5, 6, 4, 13. **He would let the Judean captives go free; he would help them restore the temple of Jehovah.”** {*Prophets and Kings, P. 557, par. 1, 2*}

“We read again in Daniel: [Daniel 10:12, 13 quoted].

“By this we see that heavenly agencies have to contend with hindrances before the purpose of God is fulfilled in its time. The king of Persia was controlled by the highest of all evil angels. **He refused, as did Pharaoh, to obey the word of the Lord.** **Gabriel declared, He withstood me twenty-one days** by his representations against the Jews. **But Michael came** to his help, and then he remained with the kings of Persia, **holding the powers in check**, giving right counsel against evil counsel.

“Good and evil angels are taking a part in the planning of God in His earthly kingdom. It is God’s purpose to carry forward His work in correct lines, in ways that will advance His glory. But Satan is ever trying to counterwork God’s purpose. **Only by humbling themselves before God can God’s servants advance His work. Never are they to depend on their own efforts or on outward display for success.”** {*Manuscript Releases, Volume 11, P. 99, par. 1-3*}

While Satan was striving to influence the highest powers in the kingdom of Medo-Persia to show disfavor to God’s people, angels worked in behalf of the exiles. The controversy was one in which all heaven was interested. Through the prophet Daniel we are given a glimpse of this mighty struggle between the forces of good and the forces of evil. **For three weeks Gabriel wrestled with the powers of darkness, seeking to counteract the influences at work on the mind of Cyrus; and before the contest closed, Christ Himself came to Gabriel’s aid.** “The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days,” Gabriel declares; “but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia.” Daniel 10:13. All that heaven could do in behalf of the people of God was done. The victory was finally gained; **the forces of the enemy were held in check** all the days of Cyrus, and all the days of his son Cambyses, who reigned about seven and a half years. { PK 571.2 }

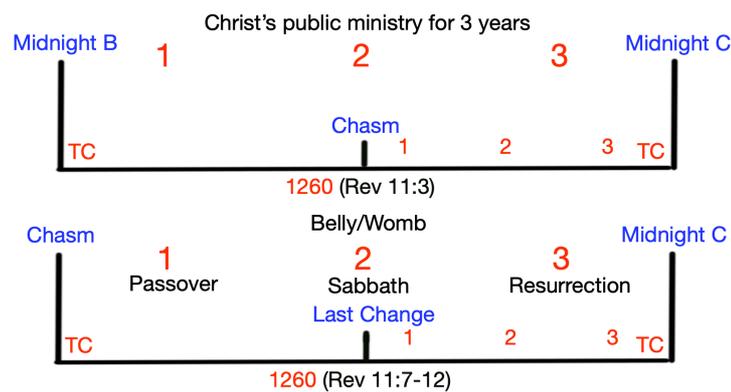
At the end of the three weeks, Christ comes to the aid of Daniel and finally, not only does the decree go forward, but Daniel has the “Marah Vision,” where Christ touches him three times.

“And, behold, **an hand touched me**, which set me upon my knees and upon the palms of my hands.” (Daniel 10:10)

“And, behold, one like the similitude of the sons of men **touched my lips**: then I opened my mouth, and spake, and said unto him that stood before me, O my lord, by the vision my sorrows are turned upon me, and I have retained no strength.” (Daniel 10:16)

“**Then there came again and touched me** one like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me,” (Daniel 10:18)

Let us now place all this on to our line so that we can have a visual representation to see things more clearly.



Summary

The birth, or incarnation of the human with the divine, is to be the whole focus of Bible prophecy. Without a correct understanding of this topic, we will fail to achieve the only thing that will allow us to stand before the Father without an intercessor. Christ, who is our teacher, gives us valuable lessons on this topic, within the many illustrations given in God’s word. His baptism is an allegory of the whole plan of salvation. It begins with a death to self, that leads to newness of life, or a resurrection from spiritual death. This culminates, with an anointing by the Holy Spirit, signalling the reception of the latter rain by His people. However, at one level, the Alpha and Omega does this for us, both at the beginning and the end of our Christian experiences. At the beginning, the death and resurrection, or baptism (by water), enables us to receive power to obey Him. This is necessary in order to live a Christian life and go through the sanctification process. Without this power, we would be unable to resist Satan’s temptations. This is what prepares us for our second birth, a test, that if we are faithful, He will purify us of our evil propensities to sin, in order that at the end, our sins will have been blotted out. This is what must happen in order for us to receive the latter rain. On another level, the birth itself is one experience of ever-increasing light from beginning to end, bringing with it a continual revelation of sin, where each time light is revealed, we are required to renounce our former errors, to die to self and walk in the new light. This is a process that from its beginning is designed to prepare us for our final test at the Sunday Law crisis. Therefore, at different levels, or different fractals, you see the birth

process, showing how the Lord will take us in our Christian experience, from the beginning, right to the end, if we will only learn to trust and obey Him.



Miscellaneous Reforms

Get out of the Cities

In this edition, I would like to discuss the necessity for us as God's people to understand our need to get out of the cities, to get away from all the chaos and problems that city living brings and to remind us of the consequences of not heeding this counsel. However, although I think it would be very beneficial for all to be in a country dwelling sooner than later, the counsel given also has to be understood in its correct prophetic context. This is by no means a conclusive study upon this matter. It is up to every individual to search out this matter for themselves, I am merely giving you some food for thought.

“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. We should now begin to heed the instruction given us over and over again: Get out of the cities into rural districts, where the houses are not crowded closely together, and where you will be free from the interference of enemies.4Ibid., 9, 10.” {Adventist Home, P. 141, par. 4}

“Let centers be no longer made in the cities. Let children no longer be exposed to the temptations of the cities that are ripe for destruction. The Lord has sent us warning and counsel to get out of the cities. Then let us make no more investments in the cities. Fathers and mothers, how do you regard the souls of your children? Are you preparing the members of your families for translation into the heavenly courts? Are you preparing them to become members of the royal family? children of the heavenly King? What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and

lose his own soul? How will ease, comfort, convenience compare with the value of the souls of your children?" {Manuscript Number 76-1905, par. 6}

For Consideration

“In choosing a home, God would have us consider, first of all, **the moral and religious influences that will surround us and our families.**
 “As the location for a home is sought, **let this purpose direct the choice.** Be not controlled by the desire for **wealth, the dictates of fashion, or the customs of society.** Consider what will tend most to simplicity, purity, health, and real worth.

“Instead of dwelling where only the works of men can be seen, **where the sights and sounds frequently suggest thoughts of evil, where turmoil and confusion bring weariness and disquietude,** go where you can look upon the works of God. **Find rest of spirit in the beauty and quietude and peace of nature.** Let the eye rest on the green fields, the groves, and the hills. Look up to the blue sky, unobscured by the city's dust and smoke, and **breathe the invigorating air of heaven.** {Counsels for the Church, P. 148, par. 1-3}

“**There is not one family in a hundred who will be improved physically, mentally, or spiritually, by residing in the city.** Faith, hope, love, happiness, can far better be gained in retired places, where there are fields and hills and trees. **Take your children away from the sights and sounds of the city, away from the rattle and din of streetcars and teams, and their minds will become more healthy.** It will be found easier to bring home to their hearts the truth of the Word of God.

“Send the children to schools located in the city, where every phase of temptation is waiting to attract and demoralize them, and **the work of character building is tenfold harder for both parents and children.**” {Country Living, P. 13, par. 2}

If you just take the principles from the quotes above, it is very clear that living in the cities makes it much harder to attain to Christian perfection in Christ. Now if God’s word states that the righteous at the end of the world are scarcely saved, why would we want to put any barriers there to hinder our need to live a sanctified life?

“**And if the righteous scarcely be saved,** where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?” (1Peter 4:18)

It is therefore very clear, that to ignore this counsel could very well cost us our eternal salvation.

Understanding the Time

“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.** Every talent lent of God should be used to His glory in giving the warning to the world. God has a work for His colaborers to do in the cities. **Our missions must be sustained;** new missions must be opened. To carry forward this work successfully will require no small outlay. **Houses of worship are needed,** where the people may be invited to hear the truths for this time. **For this very purpose, God has entrusted a capital to His stewards. Let not your property be tied up in worldly enterprises, so that this work shall be hindered.** Get your means where you can handle it for the benefit of the cause of God. **Send your treasures before you into heaven.** {*Testimonies for the Church, Volume 5, P. 464, par. 3*}

Although there is much benefit, as well as much counsel to live in the country, Sister White gives a clear prophetic marker as to the time where God's people must flee from the Cities. As we have come to understand it, the event that was marked by Cestius surrounding Jerusalem, is pointing to Midnight point B, where the people are now being threatened to worship on Sunday. If we understand the consequences that will face us at that time, then it only makes sense that we need to be in the country before that time comes to pass and not trying to flee when there will be chaos everywhere. Here is a quote that confirms this thought.

“The crisis is coming soon in Battle Creek. The trades unions and confederacies of the world are a snare. Keep out of them and away from them, brethren. Have nothing to do with them. **Because of these unions and confederacies, it will soon be very difficult for our institutions to carry on their work in the cities.** My warning is: **Keep out of the cities.** Build no sanitariums in the cities. **Educate our people to get out of the cities into the country,** where they can obtain a small piece of land and make a home for themselves and their children. When the question arose in regard to the establishment of a sanitarium in Los Angeles, I felt that I must oppose this move. I carried a very heavy burden in regard to the matter, and I could not keep silent. It is time, brethren, that we heeded the testimonies sent us in mercy and love from the God of heaven.

“Our restaurants must be in the cities; for otherwise the workers in these restaurants could not reach the people and teach them the principles of right living. And for the present, we shall have to occupy meeting houses in the cities. But ere long there will be such strife and confusion in the cities, that those who wish to leave them will not be able. We must be preparing for these issues. This is the light that is given me.” {*Manuscript, Number 20-1903, par. 3, 4*}

Sister White in the above quote was speaking about her time, but these issues are the issues that will arise at the end of the world. What happened in her time was merely the type. In the next few quotes it confirms the above.

“The work of the people of God is to prepare for the events of the future, which will soon come upon them with blinding force. In the world gigantic monopolies will be formed. **Men will bind themselves together in unions that will wrap them in the folds of the enemy.** A few men will combine to grasp all the means to be obtained in certain lines of business. **Trades unions will**

be formed, and those who refuse to join these unions will be marked men. {Selected Messages Book 2, P. 142, par. 2}

“Unionism has revealed what it is by the spirit that it has manifested. It is controlled by the cruel power of Satan. Those who refuse to join the unions formed are made to feel this power. The principles governing the forming of these unions seem innocent, but men have to pledge themselves to serve the interests of these unions, or else they may have to pay the penalty of refusal with their lives.

“These unions are one of the signs of the last days. Men are binding up in bundles ready to be burned. **They may be church members, but while they belong to these unions, they cannot possibly keep the commandments of God; for to belong to these unions means to disregard the entire decalogue.**

“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself” [Luke 10:27]. These words sum up the whole duty of man. **They mean the consecration of the whole being, body, soul, and spirit, to God’s service.** How can men obey these words, and at the same time pledge themselves to support that which deprives their neighbors of freedom of action? And how can men obey these words, and form combinations that rob the poorer classes of the advantages which justly belong to them, **preventing them from buying or selling,** except under certain conditions! How plainly the words of God have predicted this condition of things. John writes, **‘I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.... and he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name’** [Revelation 13:11, 16, 17].

“The forming of these unions is one of Satan’s last efforts. God calls upon His people to get out of the cities, isolating themselves from the world. The time will come when they will have to do this. God will care for those who love Him and keep His commandments.” {Letter 26, 1903, par. 4-7}

We need to heed this counsel, very soon the scenes here spoken about will come into effect, where it will be very difficult to sell your property, where there will be chaos everywhere. This will come upon us probably much quicker than any of us would care to believe. We should also consider very carefully the negative effects that being in the City has upon our Children, as well as ourselves. If we believe that we are in a time where we must be preparing for what is coming, it is high time that we awake to the realities that are about to come upon us. In spite of that, let us remember that God is in control and that all things should be done through prayer, study and good planning, so that we do not move in a haphazard way and bring more problems upon ourselves. May each person search out and study, to understand their duty for themselves. God bless.



