

*Review and Herald*, February 24, 1885, Advent Experience--No. 3

**"The Bitter Disappointment Which Followed  
the Passing of the Time" p. 1, par. 1, [NUM3].**

The transition from the glorious and stirring experiences of the few months previous to the passing of the time to the bitter realities of the disappointment, was very great. None can realize it but those who passed through it. Before the passing of the time the Adventists commanded attention everywhere they went. Great congregations attended their preaching. The press was full of news about their work, and they were the observed of all observers. People were convicted more or less that there was truth in their preaching, and many felt a degree of anxiety lest it might be wholly true. The latter class thought they would watch the matter closely.

p. 1, par. 2, [NUM3].

But when the time passed, everything was changed. Those who had no faith in the movement were, of course, very triumphant. "I told you so!" "You were a set of fools and fanatics!" and kindred expressions, were common. Those who had feared that the doctrine might be true were now, of course, very far from believing there was anything to it, and they showed extra zeal in denouncing it, now that the time was passed. A large number who had professed to believe it turned away as soon as possible, and cast their influence with the enemies of the faithful ones. p. 1, par. 3, [NUM3].

The most ridiculous and foolish stories about the Adventists were set afloat, and told so confidently that many believed them true. Here was where the "ascension robe" story originated, soon after the time passed, when almost anything would be believed of this poor, despised class if it were only mean enough. Never was there a more ridiculous, shameful lie. Anyone who was really acquainted with the belief of that people knows that nothing could have been more contrary to their real views of Christ's coming than to suppose that putting on any kind of outward clothing would have any bearing upon their salvation. They expected to be changed in a moment from mortality to immortality. What could the form of their dress have to do with that? p. 1, par. 4, [NUM3].

For weeks after in some places it was very unpleasant to go in public. The boys on the streets would shout, "When are you going up?" "You haven't

gone up yet!" and similar exclamations. The poor believers were indeed despised and looked down upon, and thought to be the most foolish of men. p. 1, par. 5, [NUM3].

But that which was hardest for them to bear was the fact that they themselves could not understand the reason of the disappointment. Instead of being taken up to the mansions above, they were left to the tender mercies of wicked enemies and formal professors, who looked upon them as most foolish fanatics. But what could they say? How could they meet the tide of censure from every direction? They could not explain the matter. It seemed to them perfectly dark. There were the same glorious arguments which their souls had feasted upon. They could not see a single flaw in them; yet the Lord had not come. p. 2, par. 1, [NUM3].

They felt that the time could not be long, yet they had no evidence upon which their souls could anchor. They were in doubt. Many of their brethren faltered, and some went back to the churches which they had left when the cry of Babylon's fall rang out a few months before. But there were many who could never do this. They felt that God had led them, and to give up their Advent experience was to them like giving up every- thing in their Christian experience. Had they not closely followed the Word of God to the very best of their ability? Had they not seen the promised fruits of the Spirit in connection with the work? Did not the same evidence still seem clear as ever? What had they to go back to? A wicked world? A formal, cold, opposing church, which hated the doctrine that seemed most glorious to them? No! They could not do this. They must hold on where they were till God gave them light to go farther. p. 2, par. 2, [NUM3].

There were some texts of Scripture which were very precious to them at this point. "Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at his word; Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified; but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed" (Isa. 66:5). "For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith; but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him" (Heb. 10:36-38), and corresponding texts, which seemed to have been left on purpose for the weary, waiting ones who were passing through this bitter experience, foretold by the Revelator, when the church ate the "little book," which was sweet in its first experience, but very bitter afterward. (Rev. 19:9, 10.) p. 2, par. 3, [NUM3].

**Another cause of sorrow to them was the fact that soon after the time passed disintegrating influences came into the body of believers themselves. These began to manifest here and there a class of fanatical spirits, who brought in a distracting influence. These claimed to have great light from the Lord. They prayed loud and long, read the Bible much, wore very long faces, and in many ways acted very extravagantly. They claimed superior light and sanctity, but they did not have much disposition to work with their hands, though they were very willing others should work for them. p. 2, par. 4, [NUM3].**

**On the other hand, before many months had gone by after the time passed, large numbers of the Adventists began to lose faith in the positions which had been held in the past. Some began to set new times for the Lord to come; others tried to unsettle the dates which had been generally accepted in the past. Tendencies toward popularity and the world began to be manifest in many of the believers, especially among those who tried to unsettle the old landmarks of faith. p. 3, par. 1, [NUM3].**

**All these things were a source of great trial and perplexity among the faithful and earnest believers in the substantial truthfulness of the great advent movement. They were brought into a most distressing state of anxiety, and hardly knew which way to turn. On the one hand, it seemed that their brethren and many of their leading ministers in whom they trusted were drawing back toward the world and losing faith in the great truths of the message, and that they had but little of the Spirit of God with them. p. 3, par. 2, [NUM3].**

**On the other hand, these fanatical spirits seemed so extravagant in their methods and ideas that they hardly knew what to think of them. Many even welcomed them to their houses, fearing to reject them, yet hardly knowing whether they were the children of God or not. But they watched them closely, and let them develop till they could be more certain. There seemed as yet to be no trumpet which had a "certain sound." So they listened to various tones to see if they could ascertain their whereabouts. They studied their Bibles very much, and cried to God most earnestly. They could not give up the past, yet they were uncertain of the present, and anxious for the future. p. 3, par. 3, [NUM3].**

**Their position was in many respects the most trying that God's people had passed through since the resurrection of our Lord. It resembled in many respects that experience which the disciples passed through after the Lord was**

**crucified. But those who had looked for the Lord's second coming had a longer time to wait before the true light began to shine. Many of the old Adventists were hardly seen to smile for months together. Their perplexity was very great. But God had blessings in store for them when the half-hearted should be sifted out. Light would then spring up.--G.I.B. p. 3, par. 4, [NUM3].**