

Review and Herald, March 10, 1885 - Advent Experience--No. 5

**The Gradual Development of the Truths
of the Third Angel's Message p. 1, par. 1, [NUM5].**

The transition from the disappointment after the passing of the time in 1844 to the full light of the grant system of truth which we find in the "third angel's message," was somewhat slow. We are unable to see how it could have been otherwise. The change from the strong expectation of the immediate appearing of the Lord, to the "waiting," "watching," position they afterwards occupied, was very great. And greater still to the full understanding of the sanctuary subject, the world-wide proclamation of the third message, the work of our own nation as revealed in prophecy, and kindred truths. p. 1, par. 2, [NUM5].

These truths, when fully understood, wrought a complete change in the people as to their attitude and conceptions of duty. Instead of feeling that their work for the world was done, as they did when the time in '44 was passed, they saw the necessity of great activity and earnestness, as they realized that the 144,000 were to be sealed with the seal of the living God, and that the message was to go to "peoples, nations, tongues, and kings." p. 1, par. 3, [NUM5].

Let us notice the gradual development which results in this great change. As we have seen in past articles, there were developed several classes among the Adventists within a few months after the passing of the time. As the months rolled by, and they began to cast about for standing ground, the large body of them gave up the great movement of the past, and took the position that it was false, actuated by a mesomeric spirit, and was not really a fulfillment of prophecy, but a great mistake, though honestly made. They began to set new times, and to re-arrange the old reliable dates. In so doing, they demonstrated their real lack of abiding faith.

But there were many who could not thus ignore their precious experience, and cast aside their faith. They firmly believed that the great '44 movement was a fulfillment of prophecy, and that the "midnight cry" had been made, that the 2300 days were ended, and that the first and second messages had been given. They believed that they had reached the time of the patience of the saints--the waiting, watching time. p. 1, par. 4, [NUM5].

Here they stood, earnestly looking for further light to dawn, that they might understand their duty. How earnestly they prayed and searched their Bibles none will ever know but those who passed through that experience. They had no sympathy with the great mass of Adventists who gave up the old landmarks. In many places they established separate meetings. They felt that the Spirit of God was grieved by the course of those who gave up their past experience. p. 1, par. 5, [NUM5].

This was the case in Waterbury, Vermont, where my father lived. He had meetings in his house, though the regular Adventist meeting-house was not a hundred rods away. A few believers from other towns would gather there, and they felt that God blessed them with the old advent spirit as they humbly sought Him. So it was in many places. p. 2, par. 1, [NUM5].

In 1846 O. R. L. Crozier, an Adventist minister, wrote a remarkable article on the sanctuary, which was published in the *Day Star*, an Adventist paper. In this article very many of the points of truth now held by us on that subject were brought out. The whole subject of the sanctuary and atonement was by no means made clear. But there was much truth in it, which led to further investigation. p. 2, par. 2, [NUM5].

In a short time this great central subject in the scheme of salvation was thoroughly investigated, and its various bearings understood, by some of those who were seeking light from the Lord. It afforded great relief to them, for through the sanctuary subject they received an explanation of the great disappointment. "Unto two thousand, three hundred days, then shall the sanctuary be cleansed," now glowed with celestial light. Through the types of the Old Testament they saw that our Lord and Saviour had entered upon His last and closing work, that the cleansing of the sanctuary was the same as the investigative Judgment, that then was the time for the blotting out of sin from the books of God's remembrance. They could now understand all about their disappointment, and their future work opened out before them. p. 2, par. 3, [NUM5].

Before this time, the Sabbath question had begun to be agitated among them. As early as 1844, a Seventh-day Baptist sister by the name of Preston had embraced the advent doctrine in Washington, New Hampshire, where there was quite a company of believers. By the means of tracts, etc., and laboring with the people, quite a number had begun to keep the Sabbath of the Lord. This was the agency through which the Sabbath was first introduced among

the Adventists. From that small beginning the Sabbath truth has spread already to earth's remotest bounds. p. 2, par. 4, [NUM5].

After the time passed, several began to preach the Sabbath. Elder T. M. Preble taught it for a while, and called the attention of the believers to it in a pamphlet on the subject, dated February 13, 1845. But not seeing the Sabbath reform under the message of the third angel, he gave it up, and afterward became a most bitter opposer. The same is true of Elder J. B. Cook and some other Adventist ministers who afterward abandoned it for the same cause. But the truth on this subject was thus brought before many honest souls, who held it more firmly. p. 3, par. 1, [NUM5].

In 1845, Elder Joseph Bates began to teach the Sabbath of the Bible, and others embraced it as the fruit of his labors. About this time Elder James White and wife also embraced it. They, with Brother Bates, were for a short time alone in publicly teaching it, but from this point the growth of the cause was quite rapid. p. 3, par. 2, [NUM5].

As these truths were being spread abroad, light began to shine on the third angel's message. From this time there was a work to do. In connection with these subjects light dawned upon others, such as the sealing work of the 144,000, the work of our own government as revealed in prophecy, and, in short, the space of a few years from the passing of the time our present theory of truth was quite fully developed. p. 3, par. 3, [NUM5].

What is remarkable about it is that there were never any doctrines of any importance brought out in this message which we have since been forced to abandon. More light has shone upon various points, and new truth has from time to time been added, but we have not had the mortifying experience of the First-day Adventists to go through. They have been constantly changing from one thing to another, preaching a new time one year and seeing it exploded in another, some accepting one doctrine, other portions of their ranks another, and gradually, in confusion and disorder, breaking up into factions. But in our cause from the first there has been constantly increasing light and union in faith and practice. p. 3, par. 4, [NUM5].

This movement was very small and insignificant in its beginning, but it has steadily grown till now it is doing ten times more to spread the truths of the advent doctrine throughout the world than all the other bodies of Advent believers put together. They were 50,000 strong in 1845. This work had then

hardly begun. They then ridiculed this "insignificant movement," made light of the "visions" and would hardly give us any attention, but now the scale is greatly changed. Those visions which they treated with such contempt have proved to be a wonderful source of light and blessing to this work, and their influence was never greater than today. Best of all, God has been with us all the way along. And still He is ready to help us in the dissemination of these truths. p. 3, par. 5, [NUM5].

It was perhaps six or seven years from the passing of the time before all the points of present truth were fully developed and understood, and before the believers in the third message realized, as we do at the present time, the bearing of their work and their duty to make it known to the world. It was nearly that length of time before public opinion was in a condition to present any hope of success in proclaiming these doctrines in such great contempt was the Advent name held because of the great disappointment. From that time on, however, Providence opened the way before those preaching His truth. In our next we will speak of the "shut door" doctrine, and its relation to the work of the third message.--G. I. B p. 4, par. 1, [NUM5].