

EARLY S.D.A. PERIODICALS

Facsimile Reproductions of
The PRESENT TRUTH
and
The ADVENT REVIEW



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HISTORICAL SETTING

of These Documents



THE initial literature of any religious movement is of inestimable service in understanding and evaluating the pioneering phase of its work. For this reason this rare collection of the first periodicals issued by Sabbathkeeping Adventists is here reproduced in facsimile form. This collection comprises:

The Present Truth—Eleven numbers, issued in 1849 and 1850, edited and published by James White.

The Advent Review—Five regular numbers, issued in the summer and fall of 1850, edited by James White and issued by a publishing committee of five.

The Advent Review Extra—Written by Hiram Edson in September, 1850.

The Advent Review—A condensed 48-page reprint of leading articles selected from the first four numbers of *The Advent Review*.

The issuance of this collection of initial periodicals continues the well-received plan of facsimile reproductions of the earliest literature of those least-known transition years following 1844.

This was the formative period, when two permanent religious groups were developing out of the great Second Advent Movement of the forties of the nineteenth century. The first group held to the integrity of the great Seventh Month Movement, with its terminus of the 2300 year-days of Daniel 8:14 on October 22, 1844. This smaller body accepted the advancing light on the Sabbath, the sanctuary, and the Spirit of prophecy, and ultimately became known as Seventh-day Adventists. The other, and at first larger, group rejected these three fundamentals, denied the October 22, 1844, termination of the 2300 years and the validity of the positions that they had held just prior to that date.

The Sabbatarian group began to crystallize and unify their positions through the important Sabbath Conferences of 1848 and 1849. James White, upon the urge of Ellen G. White, began to publish the "little paper" *The Present Truth*, devoted at first

largely to the Sabbath message. Then followed *The Advent Review* in an attempt to show the second, or nominal, Adventist body that Sabbatarian Adventists were now carrying forward the torch of prophetic truth once held aloft by the entire body of Adventists prior to and immediately following the Great Disappointment. These were designed to show, by rehearsing the 1844 positions, just who had departed from the earlier advent platform. Four leading brethren in association with James White—Hiram Edson, David Arnold, George Holt, and Samuel Rhodes—were responsible for this publication.

In order to widen its circulation, a 48-page special issue of the leading articles in the first four numbers of *The Advent Review* was printed and distributed more extensively. There will be duplication in the case of this special issue, but it is reproduced in its entirety in order to provide the complete record. The Hiram Edson Extra, also issued in 1850, and appearing between regular numbers 4 and 5 of *The Advent Review*, was more of a personal presentation, devoted largely to Edson's individual view.

The purpose of these facsimile reproductions, here brought out under one cover, is to make available to all Seventh-day Adventist workers and students these key documents in their complete, original form, which, because of small initial printings, and the passage of years, have become almost extinct.

The careful reader will observe that, on some points referred to in these publications, views were presented which were replaced by more accurate positions as the work advanced and the light became clearer. In this time of revived interest in the beginnings of the advent movement, and the present wholesome emphasis on the original sources as the basis of all sound investigation, it is highly appropriate that these documents be reissued in this way.

ONE expression appears often which serves as a key to these frequently misunderstood years—"the shut door." Considerable misunderstanding and confusion has sometimes arisen over a relatively simple problem. Adventists came up to 1844 expecting that the Lord would then appear and probation close for all mankind. For a brief period following October 22, those who did not at once repudiate their former faith still held that probation had closed and that there was no more mercy for sinners. Two opposite

means of emergence from this mistaken position soon developed and divided the advent body into two groups.

The Sabbatarian Adventists, as they came to be, were for a time known as the "Sabbath and shut-door" brethren, while the First-Day Adventists were called the "open-door" Adventists. This latter group gave up their former positions by denying that the 2300-year period had as yet expired. They abandoned their belief that in 1844 prophecy had been fulfilled in any sense. They therefore held that the door of salvation was still wide open to the world at large; and they were constrained to continue the preaching of a modified message, now largely divested of its former prophetic basis.

On the other hand, the Sabbatarian Adventists held that the 2300-year period had indeed ended, and that they had rightly sounded the "midnight cry" typified in the parable of the ten virgins. Confident in the integrity of their past experience, they saw themselves in the light of the parable as in the time when "the door was shut"; they believed that to those who had willfully rejected the advent message and had now become embittered, hostile, and adamant, the door had closed. For these they had no burden. Then came the unfolding sanctuary light, and they began to realize that their disappointment was to be accounted for in a misunderstanding of the *nature* of the event to take place in 1844.

They soon came to realize that Christ was now ministering in heaven above in the *second* phase of His High Priestly ministry—that He had shut the door of the first apartment and had opened the door to the second or most holy place, and they were to announce this grand transition to all who would hear. The door was still open to those who had not willfully rejected the judgment-hour message, children who had not then reached the age of accountability, and those in the churches who were still honest in heart. It was much like the initial relationship of the disciples toward the Jews as a whole. The burden was now for honest, individual hearts. Note especially *Present Truth*, December, 1849 (vol. 1, no. 6), p. 45, last full paragraph of col. 2; *Present Truth*, May, 1850 (vol. 1, no. 10), p. 79, bottom of col. 1 and top of col. 2; and Edson's *Advent-Review Extra*, September, 1850, p. 3, bottom of col. 1.

Therefore, the term "shut door" came to mean to them this new relationship of Christ and His ministry for all whose names

were "borne in upon His breastplate" into the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary. It came to supersede the earlier restricted concept. Gradually this fuller light of the final phase of Christ's ministry in the second apartment of the heavenly sanctuary, which contains the ark and the ten commandments with their enshrined Sabbath, burst upon their sight with all its implications and obligations. They came to sense their new commission for the world, as embodied in the third angel's message of Revelation 14.

Thus it is seen that the term "shut door," used by our spiritual forefathers for a brief decade following the Great Disappointment in the autumn of 1844, stood first of all for loyalty to the positions of the "midnight cry" movement through which they had just passed, and for loyalty to the integrity of the date October 22, 1844, as the true and demonstrated close of the 2300 years.

It came to stand progressively for the acceptance of the Sabbath, the Spirit of prophecy and its guidance, and the sanctuary truth that explained the nature of the Disappointment and of the actual event of 1844. In time it also came to stand for Christ's new relationship to both world and church, and consequently to His new relationship to the final phase of ministry in the heavenly sanctuary. Thus a transition was effected in the meaning of the term "shut door."

This transition period, which occupied several years following the Disappointment, was similar to the experience of the early disciples after the crucifixion of Christ, during which their work was confined to the Jews to whom they had originally given their message, until the full vision of their world mission to all peoples broke upon their minds and they entered upon their larger task.

The periodicals here reproduced were issued in the latter part of this transition hour. They do not constitute the full history of this vital period, but they are important source documents. The careful perusal of these rare publications reveals to the student of this movement of prophecy the stature and integrity of the men who, under God, were determined to maintain their confidence in God's leadership of the past and to advance in the unfolding light shining with increasing luster upon their pathway.

COMMITTEE ON PUBLICATIONS.

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