

The century between 1750 and 1850 was one of the very greatest and richest birth-hours of all history. The revival of prophetic study was only one of five great religious movements which sprang into full vigour during this period, resulting in untold blessing to the world:

- The Wesleyan Revival in England.
- The Great Missionary Awakening.
- The Bible Society Movement.
- The Revival of Prophetic Study.
- The Great Second Advent Awakening.

3.—IDENTIFYING THE PEOPLE OF REVELATION 10

By taking the "little book" from the angel's hand and eating it, the prophet John dramatises the joyous experience of thousands of Christian believers who took part in the revival of prophetic study and the great Second Advent Awakening which followed, in the first half of the last century.

From a close study of the time-prophecies of Daniel—especially "the 2,300 days" of Dan. 8: 14—thousands of men and women in all the major churches were convinced that Christ would return in or about 1844. They understood the "cleansing of the Sanctuary" to mean the cleansing of the earth by fire at the Second Advent. This re-kindling of the Blessed Hope was an experience of indescribable sweetness.

Many of those early Adventists drew a parallel between the "cleansing of the Sanctuary" and the Jewish Day of Atonement and, discovering that the Day of Atonement for 1844 would fall on 22nd October, they preached this date as the very day when Christ would come.

But 22nd October came and went without any sign of the Master's appearing. The hope that was as "sweet as honey" soured to a disappointment as "bitter" as gall. Crushed and heartbroken, they fled to the promises of God for comfort and enlightenment. The key to an understanding of their disappointment was found in God's sure Word.

4.—EXPLAINING THE DISAPPOINTMENT OF REVELATION 10

After John's bitter disappointment in eating the "little book", he was instructed to "rise and measure the temple of God" (Rev. 11: 1). Likewise, the disappointed Adventists of 1844 were moved by the Spirit of God to make a careful re-examination of the Biblical Sanctuary, and the prophecies which related thereto. In the course of this study they found the key to their disappointment.

Scores of painstaking checkings and re-checkings of the 2,300 days prophecy proved that they had made no mistake respecting the time of its fulfilment. All admitted that there was no fault in their calculation of the time. Their error lay in their mistaken conclusions respecting the nature of the event which was to occur at the end of the 2,300 days!

Whereas they had concluded that the "cleansing of the Sanctuary" symbolised Christ's return to earth, they now realised that this "cleansing" was to take place in Heaven, and referred to the opening of the second, or judgment-phase of Christ's ministry in the Heavenly Sanctuary, which must be completed before His return to the earth.

Like a sudden shaft of light leaping out of midnight darkness, this new and Scriptural understanding of the "cleansing of the Sanctuary" transfigured their disappointment and kindled their hearts with new hope. Instead of lingering in their minds as a painful embarrassment, the disappointment of 1844 now became a sheet anchor for their faith! They realised that this very disappointment had been marked beforehand in God's prophetic Word which, by its patent fulfilment, had become an indisputable seal of the Divine character of the 1844 movement. What had seemed to be their heaviest liability had now become their greatest asset. They were able to find themselves, and their own bitter experience, upon the pages of the open Bible! This conviction fired the hearts of the disappointed Adventists and made their testimony invincible.