

ELLEN G. WHITE ESTATE

# ADVENT EXPERIENCE

GEORGE I. BUTLER



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# **Advent Experience**

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**Ellen G. White**

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Ellen G. White (1827-1915) is considered the most widely translated American author, her works having been published in more than 160 languages. She wrote more than 100,000 pages on a wide variety of spiritual and practical topics. Guided by the Holy Spirit, she exalted Jesus and pointed to the Scriptures as the basis of one's faith.

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by George I. Butler

# Contents



# Contents

Information about this Book .....	i
Contents .....	iv
Introduction .....	vii
Chapter 1—“Previous to the Passing of the Time in 1844” .....	x
Chapter 2—“The Bitter Disappointment Which Followed the Passing of the Time” .....	xiv
Chapter 3—“The Shut Door and Kindred Matters” .....	xviii
Chapter 4—The Gradual Development of the Truths of the Third Angel’s Message .....	xxiii
Chapter 5—“The Shut Door Doctrine Among the Believers in the Third Angel’s Message” .....	xxvii
Chapter 6—“The Shut-Door Doctrine Among the Believers in the Third Angel’s Message” .....	xxxi
Chapter 7—“The Shut Door Doctrine Among the Believers in the Third Angel’s Message” .....	xxxvi
Chapter 8—“The Shut Door Doctrine Among the Believers in the Third Angel’s Message” .....	xliv
Chapter 9—“The Close of Probation to Those Who Reject Light” l	

The Review and Herald, February 10, 1885, Advent  
Experience—No. 1

## Introduction

The old'44 Adventists are rapidly passing away. Only a little handful remains among us. The mass of our people are not personally acquainted with the facts connected with the passing of the time, the short period of confusion which followed before the rise of the third angel's message, and the events connected with its early history. They know little concerning what was known as the "shut door doctrine" or the causes which led to it. There are now very few public laborers among us who are personally acquainted with these facts. Father Bates, Elders White and Andrews, and quite a number of others who acted as public speakers, are gone.

Yet there are facts of the very deepest interest connected with that interesting period, which have a vital connection with our present work. This message is connected with all that experience by indissoluble ties. If that Advent experience was not of God, this cannot be. If that was a fanatical movement, this must be also. But if that first message was a true prophetic movement, this surely is. The messages constitute but one series. They stand together or fall together.

Our opponents make desperate efforts to show that some great errors and mistakes were connected with the work after the passing of the time, hoping to thus disgrace the whole movement. There has been more ink wasted on this subject in their vain endeavors than almost any other.

That period in our history will ever be one of absorbing interest to all believers in this message. The experience of God's people was one of the most trying at that time that perhaps any religious body has passed through for centuries. From a child the writer was brought up in the midst of the Advent experience. Being ten years of age when the time passed in 1844, we remember the events of the next few years as well as almost any in our life. At that period of life impressions remain most deeply fixed in the memory. Being acquainted with the third angel's message when perhaps there were

not more than fifty Adventist Sabbath keepers in the world, we have had an extensive knowledge of the facts connected with its early history.

[2] After speaking recently on these subjects in the Tabernacle, we were requested to write out for the *Review* some of the facts relating to this interesting period of Advent history. We hope this will not only be of interest to the readers of the *Review*, but that it will add to their confidence in the correctness of our position, and serve as a defense when our enemies try to break down their faith in this sacred work. We are sure from personal knowledge that we have nothing to fear from the most scrutinizing investigation of early Advent history. The more closely it is investigated, the better it will be for the cause; it is only a *partial* knowledge of the facts that we need to fear. When we understand all about the facts connected with the “shut door doctrine,” as it is called, we shall find nothing of which we need to be ashamed.

The believers in Christ’s soon coming were grievously, bitterly disappointed in not seeing the Lord in 1844. They were for a time in confusion. Doubt and questioning sorely perplexed the true believers. Some, of whom better things were expected, gave up their faith, many going back to the world. It was a time of great trial with them. But when the light on the third message broke in, they saw their bearings, and the past was made clear. It is morally impossible for those who learn of these facts of Advent experience by hearsay to realize them in the same sense and intensity that those did who personally experienced them. We may believe the words of those who tell us about these things, yet they are not as real as if we had seen them and felt the emotions of the living actor. Our great danger as a people is that we will not now share by faith the Advent spirit manifested then, and that we shall receive in its place a worldly, indifferent, careless spirit, which pervades all Christendom.

How much we would rejoice to see manifest among us more of the old Advent fire and intensity of interest seen in 1844. We want that experience revived in our midst. We want that spirit of sacrifice to give life and push to the work. With the glorious theory of truth we possess, if this spirit was permeating the whole body we should soon hear the loud cry of the message in all directions. Right here is the element too much lacking.

We hope in some faint degree to give the readers of the *Reviews* some ideas of that interesting period. In the next issue we will speak of the closing part of the '44 experience.—G.I.B.

The Review and Herald, February 17, 1885, Advent  
Experience—No. 2

## Chapter 1—“Previous to the Passing of the Time in 1844”

Adventists can never forget the experiences of that year. Nothing of like nature was ever observed in the history of this people. Father Miller had been laboring some ten years in proclaiming the evidences of Christ’s soon coming. Other prominent laborers had become connected with him in the work. For two or three years previous to ’44, the doctrine had attracted a great deal of attention. It was commented upon in the papers, and the Adventist laborers were everywhere welcomed in the orthodox churches, as great revivals followed their labors. The most earnest Christians of the various sects were favorable to the doctrine, and they loved the spirit which went with it. Eminent scholars and theologians gave attention to it by writing articles which were printed in the leading papers, some of the same class of persons opposing the doctrine. But the replies [3] of its defendants were thought to be triumphantly successful, and certainly the opposition only added to the intensity of the interest.

As the time drew nearer and nearer, the influence of the movement became more and more extended. It was the general subject of remark—the principal topic of conversation through large sections of country. The most intense interest prevailed among the Adventists themselves. The arguments brought out by Mr. Miller and his fellow laborers seemed so clear to them that their confidence was perfect that the Lord’s coming was indeed just before them. They felt in their souls that they should behold their Lord in the very near future.

The spirit of labor for the unconverted, and the intense interest felt for the salvation of souls, we can little realize in this age of cold formality. The power of the Spirit of God was present in their meetings, so that many who came with idle curiosity or as scoffers, were brought to give themselves to God, and humble themselves by confessing their sins with the deepest penitence and bitter weeping, and then to rejoice with all their souls as the Lord poured His blessing upon them. Anyone who heard the singing at that time will not

be likely to forget it. It seemed to have a peculiarly solemn and penetrating power, a heavenly sweetness which charmed the listener and softened the heart. Many went to the meetings to hear it.

The preaching was very solemn, becoming more and more so as the time drew nearer and nearer. The work went with mighty power in '43 and '44, in all directions, especially in the Eastern States of this country. We have abundance of evidence to show that it extended more or less to all parts of the world. We will not undertake in this article to give anything like a general or connected account of the work of the first message during that interesting period. We were too young to have anything more than a local knowledge. The life of Father Miller will present many interesting facts; also those excellent works of Elder White, *Life Incidents*, or *Life Sketches*, for sale at the Offices and Depositories. We think that all the readers of the *Review* should peruse these works. Everyone who is a believer in the present work ought to be thoroughly acquainted with the first angel's message. We will only mention a few things which came under our personal observation.

We remember distinctly a course of Advent sermons delivered by Columbus Green in Waterbury, Vermont, we think in the early part of 1843. They were given in the Methodist church in the village. The impression of the solemnity of that meeting and the preaching of Mr. Green I can never forget, though I was but a small boy at the time. The house was densely packed with people, and everything was as still as death except the voice of the speaker. His countenance was very pale, and his words had the solemnity of the Judgment, as he discoursed upon the false shepherds and their terrible doom in the day of the Lord. As the speaker was portraying these things in burning words, Mr. Stone, the Congregationalist minister of the place, and one who had no love for the Advent doctrine, arose from the midst of the congregation, while his face wore a look of defiance, and stood up as if accepting the remarks as applicable to himself. Mr. Green talked all the more earnestly, and with language terribly pointed, pictured the doom which awaited those belonging to the class of false shepherds. Though more than forty years have passed, the scene is as vivid as if it happened yesterday. [4]

We also distinctly recall a camp meeting held by the Adventists at Cabot, Vermont, which my parents attended. Elder Shipman and

a large number of other leading preachers were in attendance. It was a very large meeting. We remember the preaching from the large stand in the grove, and the sea of upturned faces, earnest and solemn. The small meetings in the tents, and the earnest labor for souls in the little meetings held in them between the regular services, we recall very distinctly.

Unlike our camp meetings almost all the time between the regular services was filled up in meetings in the small tents. Someone would commence to pray or sing, and a number would begin to gather in. There was labor for some soul yet in the dark, and earnest pleading went up to God in his behalf till he would break down and seek God for himself; when victory came, there was great rejoicing. There were more thorough and heartfelt confessions of sin than we usually see in these days. These meetings went on in many places, and many souls were converted in this manner.

One could go out in the grove in the early morning, and many persons could be seen kneeling here and there, pleading earnestly for God's blessing. The voice of prayer could be heard in many directions. There was an entire absence of levity and the visiting spirit. Earnestness, devotion, and love for the coming of Christ were everywhere present. Oh! that more of these were now present.

I well remember the meetings which just preceded the passing of the time. In my native town the Adventists had no meetinghouse of their own. So they fitted up a large room in the upper story of the starch factory owned by "Parker and Butler," both deacons of the Baptist church and both zealous Adventists. Here meetings were constantly held, with large crowds in attendance. Just before the time passed meetings were held nearly all the time. Most of the believers left their crops in the fields ungathered, giving the poor liberty to supply their own wants. They felt it would be a denial of their faith to lay up their store as for another season when they believed the Lord was coming in a few weeks.

We remember one wealthy and very economical farmer who had a large orchard. He went out into it just before the passing of the time, and seeing many apples on the ground, gathered them into the house. In the night his conscience so troubled him at what he had done that he got up and threw them out. This was, of course, an extreme case. But it shows something of the intensity of spirit



which prevailed. The appointed time came the last week in October. Scarcely any of the believers dug their potatoes that year till the ground froze; but they suffered little loss thereby, as the weather continued mild. Potatoes dug early that year rotted very badly, while those left in the ground till later were saved.

Just before the time passed, meetings were held constantly. There was no fanatical excitement among the believers where I was, but a very solemn, humble feeling, each one most anxious how his own case should stand in the Judgment. Persons became very honest at that time. Sins were confessed which no one dreamed had been committed. Many who had thought sprinkling was just as good as immersion concluded it was best to go down into the water as their Lord did, though no special effort was made to get them to do so. People could see things then with very little argument which before [5] no one could make them believe. There were no “ascension robes” or any such follies whatever. But many were anxious to have robes of character that would pass the test of the Judgment.

During the night when the time passed meetings continued all night. There was a drunken, noisy rabble howling around, and making the night hideous. But the believers were praying most earnestly for God to guard, shield, and save them. If ever men gave evidence of honesty and true faith, they did then. Their whole hearts were in the work. They most certainly expected their probation was just closing. Tears and earnest pleadings for God’s acceptance were heard on every hand. But the morning came, and the Lord did not come. Still, many continued to expect Him for days. But soon all realized they were disappointed, and their hearts were very sad. The bitterness of that disappointment none can realize but those who passed through it. Of this we will speak next week.—G.I.B.

[The Review and Herald, February 24, 1885](#), Advent  
Experience—No. 3

## **Chapter 2—“The Bitter Disappointment Which Followed the Passing of the Time”**

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.

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.

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?

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. [6]

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.

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 everything 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.

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” ([Isaiah 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” ([Hebrews](#)

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. ([Revelation 19:9, 10.](#))

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.

[7] 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.

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.

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.

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.

[The Review and Herald, March 3, 1885, Advent Experience—No. 4](#)

## Chapter 3—“The Shut Door and Kindred Matters”

Perhaps there has never been anything connected with the Advent movement that our enemies have tried harder to use to our reproach than the shut door doctrine. We propose to examine this matter quite closely, and to give the facts concerning it, for the benefit of those of our people who are not familiar with them. We shall find them very different from what they are represented by our enemies.

We have stated how earnest and devoted the believers were previous to the passing of the time, and the bitter reaction which followed. All was zeal and earnestness and activity before, but sorrow, disappointment, and perplexity followed. The bitter hatred against the doctrine of Christ’s soon coming, manifested by many church members, resembling that of the Jews against the disciples because they believed in Christ’s first advent, was strong evidence to the believers that the Spirit of God was withdrawn from them. They had done their utmost to warn the world, and knew that God had blessed them in their work. They knew the doctrine was founded upon the rock of eternal truth—the Word of God. Therefore they knew that those who bitterly opposed the work were fighting against God.

[8] As the time passed there was a general feeling among all the earnest believers that their work for the world was done. Day by day they were still waiting, watching, and longing for the appearing of the Saviour, not knowing why He tarried. At this time no one gave credence to their advent views, or manifested the slightest interest to listen to them. They were considered fanatics because they would not give up their belief after their disappointment.

The great change, manifested in the almost fiendish spirit of the opposers, and that in their own feelings relative to laboring for the salvation of souls, together with the bearing of certain texts of Scripture, led them to the conclusion that their work for the world was done. Mr. Miller and others believed that the door would be shut a short time before Christ came. In a letter to Elder J. V. Himes, October 6, 1844, he said: “I am strong in the opinion that the next

will be the last Lord’s day sinners will ever have in probation. And within ten or fifteen days from that time they will see Him whom they hated and despised to their shame and everlasting contempt.”

This was very natural in view of such texts as [Revelation 22:11, 12](#): “He that is unjust let him be unjust still; he which is filthy let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous let him be righteous still; and he that is holy let him be holy still. And behold I come quickly.” No doubt probation will close some little time previous to the appearing of Jesus.

When the midnight cry ended and the time passed, they felt that the last great test was reached. This was the universal feeling at the time. Their intense burden for souls had ceased. The Satanic spirit around them made the matter still more clear to their minds.

After the time passed, Mr. Miller in another letter addressed to Elder Himes says: “We have done our work in warning sinners and in trying to awaken a formal church. God in His providence has shut the door. We can only stir one another up to be patient and to be diligent to make our calling and election sure. We are now living in the time specified in [Malachi 8:18](#) (also [Daniel 12:20](#), [Revelation 22:10-12](#)).”

In this passage we cannot help but see that a little while before Christ should come, there would be a separation between the just and the unjust, between the righteous and the wicked, between those who love his appearing and those who hate it. And never since the days of the apostles has there been such a division line drawn as was drawn about the time of the seventh Jewish month. Since that time they say they have no confidence in us. We have need of patience after we have done the will of God, that we may receive the promise.

In another letter published in the *Advent Herald*, he says: “I did believe, and must confess that I do now, that I have done my work in warning sinners, and that in the seventh month.” George Needham, another prominent Adventist minister, says in the *Voice of Truth*, March 19, 1845: “I am and have been convinced since the tenth day of the seventh month that our work for the world and the foolish virgins is done. I must deny that glorious movement as being the work of God, or I can come to no other conclusion. That I can never do. The foolish virgins have gone to the old establishments where they sell oil, and are crying to us to come after them, and the world

are with them to buy a little oil, and shall we go to them with the hope of doing them any good? *Not lest we die.*”

[9] J. B. Cook, another prominent Adventist, says in *Advent Testimony*: “If the Advent cause and people be worthy of divine interposition, or this the era to expect the Lord, then we are down through the shut door in that representation of Advent history. My language to many has been, I believe in the shut door just as you have *experienced* it.”

We have given these extracts from prominent Adventists, none of whom were in what we call the third angel’s message. We could quote many others who taught similar sentiments, and who acted a leading part in the great ’44 movement. There can be no question that for months after the time passed it was the general sentiment that their work of warning the world was over. They felt so because:

(1) They believed the proclamation in the past was a fulfillment of prophecy, a solemn announcement that “the hour of God’s Judgment is come,” the Lord having signally blessed the movement and those who were connected with it. They could not question the truthfulness of this without denying their faith.

(2) The attitude assumed by those who rejected the message was bitter and wicked, like those who rejected Christ; which was clear evidence to them that they had rejected important light and truth. They felt therefore that God had rejected them.

(3) Their own position and feelings made the matter still more clear. They had an intense burden of soul before for all classes, and labored incessantly to warn them and save them, pouring out their means lavishly and willing to make any sacrifice to do so. They felt in their souls that it was the Spirit of God that impelled them to do this. Now they felt entirely different. Their burden was gone, and they thought their work was done. Besides, there were none who desired their labor. Under these circumstances, was it strange that they should feel that “the door was shut” as God’s Word said it would be at a certain point? How could they have felt otherwise unless they threw away all their wonderful experience?

But as the months passed by after the passing of the time, believers began to doubt and to give up their past experiences. Prominent men, like George Storrs, did so, and within six months large numbers had become unsettled. The leaders began to look around for some



new ground to stand upon. Instead of waiting patiently, and finding the true light in the Bible explanation of the heavenly sanctuary and the third angel’s message, they demonstrated their lack of true faith by unsettling the old advent landmarks and giving up the great movement as fanaticism. True faith is always shown in times of darkness and persecution, perplexity and unpopularity. With most of them there was a great lack, as the result demonstrated. Doubtless this was the reason God permitted them to pass through this experience.

For six years in succession some Adventists moved the time for the termination of the 2300 days of [Daniel 8](#). The result brought disappointment and confusion among them. But the true and faithful believers did not participate in this foolish work. Many of the old laborers began to talk of going forth to “re-arouse the slumbering churches” which had rejected the light. But their success was not encouraging. In 1843 and 1844 loud calls were made to give up the work of God as a mistake, mesmerism, etc.

April 29, 1845, there was a large meeting of Adventists at Albany, New York. Leading laborers were present, and over fifty preachers. Plans were formed to go to work as they had done before the passing of the time. Strong expressions were indulged in concerning the great movement of the past. Elder J. V. Himes was reported by those present as saying, “The seventh month movement produced mesmerism seven feet deep.” That which they themselves had in the past acknowledged as the Spirit of God impelling them to work and sacrifice in His cause; that which had produced a solemnity and depth of spiritual experience not known for centuries, was now denounced as *mesmerism*.

[10]

From that point the great mass of the Adventist body began to lose their power. Distraction came into their midst. Biting and devouring one another became the order of the day, and soon that large body of over 50,000 Adventists which came out of the popular churches upon the cry of “Babylon is fallen,” began to disintegrate, split up into divisions, and gradually to go to pieces, till they have largely lost their influence in moving people to believe in the coming of Christ. Like the foolish virgins, they lost the *oil*—the Spirit of God—took ground against the past advent work, the Sabbath and the true work of God, and their course has been most sad and discouraging.

But there were honest souls scattered here and there who would not, could not, follow them in this course. They still prayed for light, held on to the old pillars of the faith, and believed God would open the way before them. Of their experience I will speak further.—  
G.I.B.

[The Review and Herald, March 10, 1885](#) - Advent Experience—No.

## Chapter 4—The Gradual Development of the Truths of the Third Angel’s Message

The transition from the disappointment after the passing of the time in 1844 to the full light of the great 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.

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.”

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, [11] 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.

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.

This was the case in Waterbury, Vermont, where my father lived. He had meetings in his house, though the regular Adventist meetinghouse 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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

[12]

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.

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.

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.

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.

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

[The Review and Herald, March 17, 1885](#) - Advent Experience—No.

## Chapter 5—“The Shut Door Doctrine Among the Believers in the Third Angel’s Message”

We have now reached a most interesting point. Our enemies claim that from the beginning of this work, which we call the “third angel’s message,” till 1851, those engaged in it believed there was no salvation for sinners, and that the visions of Mrs. E. G. White taught the same doctrine. Hence, they say, the visions are not reliable, and the work itself is disgraced. These charges have been repeated over and over, and some souls have been deceived and thrown into darkness thereby. [13]

For the sake of helping such and saving others from the same fate, we propose to sift these charges thoroughly and see what truth there is in them. We shall admit all the truth they contain, and expose the error. If this is God’s truth, we can afford to be fair. If it will not bear the test of careful examination, and a full knowledge of the facts, the quicker those engaged in it hear the truth the better for them. They, of all others, are most interested to know the truth.

Nothing can ever be really gained by concealing any fact or by deception. We believe it is always best to admit all the truth there is in any matter rather than to conceal it. Honesty is the best policy. In saying this, however, we wish it to be understood that we have no idea that there was anything connected with the rise of this message which anyone should wish to conceal. In order that we may be thoroughly understood as we enter upon the examination of this subject, we will briefly state the positions which we shall undertake to maintain by the plainest proof; viz.:

1. That in common with the great body of Adventists at the passing of the time in 1844, and a few months following, those who afterward believed in the third message did feel that “their work for the world was done.” They thought that probation had closed and that the Lord would come “very soon.”

2. That while the larger part of the Adventists by six months after the passing of the time had given up the ’44 movement as a mistake,

and had gone to work “to re-arouse the old churches,” other believers clung to it as a fulfillment of prophecy, and earnestly sought for light and found it in the great sanctuary truth, in the messages, etc. These explained the disappointment, and their work now opened out before them.

**3.** That because of their acquaintance with these truths they now had an intelligent understanding of the “shut door doctrine.” At the close of the 2300 days in ’44 Christ changed His ministration from the holy to the most holy place, and commenced the work of Judgment, His last and final work. In this change the door of the first apartment was closed, and the door into the most holy was opened. This is brought to view in [Revelation 3:7, 8](#), and in other scriptures. All the believers in the message recognized this change, and do yet. It was a real change, and led to the discovery of important truths.

**4.** That they had, therefore, much to say about a “shut door” because they thus recognized the past movement as genuine in distinction from those Adventists who had given it all up. They did also believe that those who had rejected and bitterly opposed the first message were rejected of God, and as late as 1851 they had much to say of the “shut door,” for up to that time their efforts to proselyte were largely confined to those who had believed the advent doctrine in 1844.

**5.** But that their belief in the “shut door doctrine” was “not” such as to forbid the salvation of those who had not rejected the first message, or those who had come to years of accountability since the passing of the time, for plenty of instances can be found where they labored for the salvation of such persons.

**6.** That the vision of Mrs. E. G. White so often quoted is in perfect harmony with these positions.

**7.** And finally that the Scriptures themselves are in perfect harmony with such a kind of shut door as this, and indeed, that various texts really teach the same thing.

We have already considered quite fully the first point, relative to the great body of Adventists after the passing of the time. We have shown that William Miller and other ministers and leading men for a few months fully believed that their work for the world was done. They were looking for the Lord to come “immediately”, and they studied carefully those scriptures which speak of probation closing



previous to Christ’s appearing. We will quote from Mr. Miller in the *Advent Herald* of December 11, 1844:

“We have done our work in warning sinners and in trying to awake a formal church. God in His providence has shut the door. We can only stir one another up to be patient, and be diligent to make our calling and election sure. We are now living in the time specified in [Malachi 3:18](#), also [Daniel 12:10](#), [Revelation 22:10-12](#). In this passage we cannot help but see that a little while before Christ should come there would be a separation between the just and the unjust, between the righteous and the wicked, between those who love His appearing and those who hate it. And never since the days of the apostles has there been such a dividing line drawn as was drawn about the 10th or 23d day of the 7th Jewish month. Since that time they say they have no confidence in us. We have now need of *patience* after we have done the will of God, that we may receive the promise.”

We here see how those texts which do show that probation will close previous to Christ’s coming, were appropriated by the disappointed believers at that time. But after a few months this position was given up, and most of them gave up the ’44 movement altogether. There they went into the dark. Who can tell what might have happened if all that great body had remained faithful till the light on the third message had fully dawned? If the children of Israel could have gone immediately into Canaan had they been true to God, who can say that if the Advent body had all taken hold of the third message, and sounded the warning throughout the world, the work might not have closed long ago? But they showed their lack of faith, and gave up the truth of the past.

Those of them who did not thus give up their faith, but waited for light, held at the time the same views on the shut door that the others did. But when the sanctuary truth was understood, and the truths of the present message, new light broke into their minds in many directions. Now they had something to labor for. Their first efforts naturally were diverted to the old believers who had known of the work of God in the first message. Father Bates and Elder and Mrs. White traveled much in hunting up these faithful ones in different parts of the country. Many received the truth with the greatest gladness. It explained their difficulties, and gave them

something solid upon which to stand. No one, save those who passed through that experience, can realize their joy as they saw the clear light.

[15] For several years there was no interest among unbelievers in general to hear upon the advent doctrine. The stigma resting upon the movement in the past forbade this. The principal thought was to find those who loved the advent doctrine, and get the present truth before them. Therefore the providence of God seems to shape their labors wholly in the direction of those already believers, and not toward unbelievers.

Again, in all those localities where Advent believers lived, the doctrine had been known more or less, and the light had shone. Consequently the people had been tested upon it there. Those who had rejected the doctrine were much in the same position as those Jews who rejected the work of John the Baptist. Christ said these had “rejected the counsel of God against themselves.”

The believers in the third message felt no burden for this class; and as they saw no interest in the truth among the people generally, they felt, very naturally, for awhile after the time passed, that all around them had rejected the light; and therefore they made no special effort to bring the truth before them. They were earnestly engaged in rescuing their brethren from the time-setting theories of the first-day Adventists, and in trying to hold them to their faith in the work; at the same time keeping their own faith warm and earnest.—G. I. B.

[The Review and Herald, March 24, 1885](#), Advent Experience—No.

## Chapter 6—“The Shut-Door Doctrine Among the Believers in the Third Angel’s Message”

When the light upon the heavenly sanctuary was seen by the believers many things were explained concerning their position and disappointment, and among other things, the “shut door.” We do not say that they all fully realized the bearing of the subject at first. It would have been unreasonable to expect so much as that. But it afforded the key which gradually unlocked the whole subject. We will try to explain the process step by step.

As they realized that the cleansing of the sanctuary at the end of the 2300 days was not the cleansing of the earth by fire, but that it was the temple of God in heaven—the antitype of the one built by Moses—and that its cleansing was the removal or blotting out of sin—the investigative judgment—connected with the last work of our great High Priest just before He comes to earth, great light dawned upon their minds upon many subjects. In the earthly type the ministration, or service, closed in the first apartment of the sanctuary when the high priest commenced his work in the most holy place. This was signified by the closing of the first door and the opening of the second into the most holy.

The believers were searching their Bibles very carefully, and [Revelation 3:7-11](#) became to them a very forcible scripture: “And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth, and shutteth, and no man openeth. I know thy works; behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it; for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.

“Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all

[16] the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.”

Philadelphia means “brotherly love”—a fitting description of the warm-hearted, tender interest the believers had for each other in the glorious ‘44 experience. This language applies to the time just before Jesus comes: “Behold I come quickly.” “He that hath the key of David” must be the Son of David, our Saviour. Before the believers is placed an “open door” and a “shut door.” They had “not denied his name.”

But there was another class who claimed to be God’s true people, “Jews,” but who were opposed to them, and who would yet be humbled, when the result should prove the believers right and then wrong. “Your brethren that hated you, and 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.” [Isaiah 66:5](#). These believers had come to that time of the “saints’ patience” which is located under the third angel’s message: “Here is the patience of the saints.” [Revelation 14:12](#). There can be no mistaking their position. They were believers in the soon coming of Christ. Before them was placed an “open door and a shut door.”

How beautifully was this explained by the change of ministration of our great High Priest, on the “tenth day of the seventh month,” 1844. Nothing else can explain it. We have never known anybody else to attempt it. Every point in this scripture is exemplified in the Advent experience at the passing of the time and onward. There it applies.

This scripture sheds special light upon the *nature* of the shut door. It presents an “open door” of access to all true believers, while it recognizes the change of position and ministration of Christ as He enters upon His last work. If this is a real change, most certainly it should be recognized by the true people of God on earth, who by the Spirit are guided into all truth. Those who were following in the open light of the sanctuary and the last message, did recognize; while the great mass of the Adventists, who had given up the work in the past, and the members of popular churches did not. The “open door” and “shut door” are to the present time accepted by all intelligent believers in present truth.

These views led to a modification of the believers’ faith relative to the closing of probation, which ideas they had held in common with other Adventists when the time first passed, and which they had continued to hold until this new light dawned upon the sanctuary. They still had much to say about a “shut door,” but they now coupled with it an “open door.”

In studying the example of the typical high priest they learned that probation was continued in the type “after” the ministration was entered upon in the most holy. When he ministered before the Lord and made atonement for the people, he carried in with him the breastplate of judgment, which contained the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. Those whose hearts were humble and penitent were the ones for whom the atonement was made.

So in the antitype: the believers came to understand that such as repented of their sins, and recognized the true work of God, would have the benefit of the atonement of our great High Priest in His closing work. We do not say that all understood this at once. The full light developed gradually. There were persons who had come to years of accountability after the passing of the time, or who had not rejected the light, whose minds were aroused to seek God.

[17]

We are positive that not a single case of this kind can be found in which evidence of sincerity was given, that was ever cast aside by the body of believers any time after the rise of this message. We never heard a hint of such a case. If such were found before the full development of the light as we have it at the present time, while holding to what they called the “shut door,” their interest was accounted for on the supposition that their names were “borne in on the breastplate of judgment,” or that in some other manner God had provided for their case. No honest soul was ever rejected.

But it must not be forgotten that there were very few excepting Adventists who were interested at that stage of the work, so great was the unpopularity of the advent doctrine. Hence their attention was not called to the full means of the sanctuary subject, which shows that *all* who have not rejected light may come if they will, while the judgment work is in progress.

But they came to this understanding gradually. They do not seem to have realized till 1850 or ‘51 that their future work was to be largely for those outside of the old Advent believers. Hitherto it had

been almost wholly confined to them. They had held to this modified “shut door doctrine,” and had much to say about it, because it was to them a point of great importance, since it showed the distinction between the two classes of Adventists—those who had given up the great ‘44 movement, and those who still believed in it. The first were trying to “re-arouse” the popular churches, setting new times, and unsettling old dates, and discarding that glorious work as “fanaticism.” The latter claimed it was a God-given message, foretold in the clearest manner in prophecy, and as a part of the last great warning which was to close probation.

The doctrine of the “open” and “shut” doors of the heavenly sanctuary was the very keystone of the real advent arch—the key that unlocked the whole mystery, and gave light upon their position. Because if Christ changed His ministration from the holy to the most holy in the fall of 1844, then, indeed, the “hour of His judgment is come.” The first message was a God-given message, and the third message *must follow*, now that the first and second had been given. The great mass of the Adventists must therefore be like the “foolish virgins,” in the dark.

Therefore we find the early believers in present truth often referring in their controversies with the leaders of the first-day Adventists to the “shut door” as late even as 1850 or ‘51. They directed the attention of their opposers to their own utterances after the time passed, and showed them how contradictory were their present positions. They proved to them that they had really given up the true Advent faith.

We have before us at the present writing a large pamphlet with double columns of 48 pages, called the *Advent Review* published in 1850 by Hiram Edson, David Arnold, George W. Holt, Samuel W. Rhodes, and James White (publishing committee), at Auburn, N. Y. It is almost entirely filled with articles and extracts from the leading ministers of the Adventists—William Miller, J. V. Himes, S. Bliss; A. Hale, J. Marsh, J. B. Cook, and many others.

[18] As stated in the introductory remarks, this was issued to show who had “left the original faith.” And it is clearly shown from their own words as compared with their positions then taken, that all these leading men excepting Mr. Miller, who was dead, had left that “original faith,” and that the believers in the third message were the

only ones who clung to that old faith. We thus see the significance of the “shut door” doctrine among the believers after the sanctuary was understood. Whenever it is referred to by them, it must always be considered in connection with the “open door” in which they also believed.

To show that they believed in a shut door as late as 1850 or ‘51, we will give in the next article some extracts from their own publication, the *Present Truth*, published from July, 1849, to November, 1850, and the first volume of the *Review and Herald*, the first paper published under that name dated, “Paris, Me., November, 1850,” the first volume ending June 9, 1851. In these extracts we shall present facts not known to many of those who have embraced the truth within the last 25 years.

These have a bearing on that interesting period of transition from the first and second messages to the third angel’s message. Those opposed to us have tried to make it appear that we are afraid to have the facts about the “shut door” come to light. We promise to give those extracts which they consider most objectionable, and to put beside them facts which fully explain those passages.—G.I.B.

[The Review and Herald, March 31, 1885](#) - The Advent  
Experience—No. 8

## Chapter 7—“The Shut Door Doctrine Among the Believers in the Third Angel’s Message”

We now proceed to give extracts on the “shut door” doctrine, showing that believers in the message held to such a belief as late as 1850 or ‘51. In Vol. 1, No. 6, of the *Review and Herald*, published in Paris, Me., February, 1851, a letter is given which a brother wrote to his son. It begins as follows: “I have from the presentation of truth embraced the seventh-day Sabbath and shut door as being my last refuge in this dark and gloomy day.” And when about half through he says, “Hence I embraced the ‘midnight cry,’ the ‘shut door,’ and the third angel’s message as being my last refuge, as I stated at first.”

But what kind of a “shut door” does this brother believe in? Opposers would say, “Of course if he believes in a shut door at all, this would exclude all conversions.” But what does he say about it? A few lines below this last extract he speaks as follows: “My time and your patience might be exhausted were I to bring to your view the whole subject connected with the shut door. Suffice it to say that it does not in my opinion exclude all conversions. But it does exclude those who have wholly rejected all these messages.

“I believe that the names recorded in the ‘Lamb’s book of life’ were brought in on the tenth day of the seventh month; that he then bore in their names before the Father as the antitype of the ‘breastplate of judgment.’” It is reasonable to suppose that these views were in accordance with the opinions of those who published them in the *Review*, or they would not have been published therein.

We next give an extract from the *Review* of January, 1851, from my own lamented father, who embraced the truth in 1850. It is taken from a letter he wrote to Elder Joseph Marsh, editor of the *Advent Harbinger*, one of the leading first-day Adventist papers. Elder White published it in the *Review*. In this letter to Mr. Marsh my father gives some reasons for embracing present truth. He says: “At the passing of this time (1844) I believed the door was shut; nor was I alone in this belief. Yourself, and almost every other Advent



believer, for months after the passing of the time believed the work for the world was done.” Here he quotes extracts from Mr. Miller and others to show that they believed thus.

He then asks, “If we have not had the midnight cry, *when*, and *where*, and *how* can we have it?” He then speaks of the Albany Conference, the effect it had upon the body of believers, and the confusion and coldness that came in. He concludes thus: “We have another testing truth before us; viz., the third angel’s message; and I very much fear it will be too close a test for some of the leaders in the Advent movement. Leaders don’t love to be led. But the Lord will abase the high and exalt the humble. The last shall be first, and the first, last.

“I have been greatly blessed in meeting with the seventh-day Sabbath and shut door brethren. They hold to the past and defend our present position. I believe they have the truth, and that God is leading them by His Spirit.”

But what kind of a shut door did he believe in? In a letter written to Brother and Sister White, published in *Review* of January, 1851, he says: “Since I have been converted to the *shut door* and seventh-day Sabbath, I have been out in this town and some of the neighboring towns ...to try to get off some of the prejudice from other minds which I so deeply felt on my own...I have learned from conversation with others as well as from my past experience that the *shut door* has been the *great shoal* on which the Adventists have run their ship and foundered.”

Then he speaks of their contradictory positions on the messages, midnight cry, etc., and says: “You see how all these have shunned the door.” Then he speaks further upon the movements among them, and how they were “scattered upon the mountains,” etc., and then remarks: “They suppose the shut door would exclude from every degree of the Spirit of God all the unconverted having had *light* or *no light*, *young* or *old*. I think if this class could have the true shut door and the third angel’s message set before them, some of them would see the true line of prophecy and rejoice again in the light. I have been striving to look up those who have not given up our past experience in these messages, and trying to show them what the sanctuary is and what the shut door is; that the sanctuary spoken of in [Daniel 8:14](#) is being cleansed.—E. P. Butler.”

That father, in his view of the shut door, was at this time in perfect accordance with Brother and Sister White, we know by personal knowledge. We will show Elder White's views on this subject by an extract from his own statements. Just two months after this, in the April number of the [The Review and Herald](#), 64, is a letter from M. M. Truesdail, in which he asks the question, "Does the shut door exclude all conversion?" Elder White answers:

[20] "Conversion, in the strictest sense, signifies a change from sin to holiness. In this sense we readily answer that it does not exclude all conversions; but we believe that those who heard the 'everlasting gospel' message and rejected it, or refused to hear it, are excluded by it. We have no message to such. They have no ears to hear us, unless we lower the standard of truth so low that there would be no salvation in it. But there are those who may be converted.

"1. Erring brethren. We believe that there are many in the Laodicean church, who will yet be converted as the apostle directs in his epistle to the waiting brethren. 'Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one CONVERT him, let him know that he which converteth the SINNER from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.' [James 5:19, 20](#).

"2. Children who were not old enough to understandingly receive or reject the truth when our great High Priest closed His mediation in the holy place at the end of the 2300 days, are subjects of conversion from sin to holiness. Their names were borne in upon the breastplate of judgment, and they are subjects of the mediation of Jesus. God's ways are equal. He will give every intelligent being a chance to be saved.

"3. When Elijah thought that he was alone, God said to him, 'I have reserved to myself seven thousand men who have not bowed to the image of Baal.' We believe that God has reserved to Himself a multitude of precious souls, and some even in the churches. These he will manifest *in His own time*. They were living up to what light they had when Jesus closed His mediation for the world, and when they hear the voice of the Shepherd in the message of the third angel they will gladly receive the whole truth. Such will be converted to the truth, and from their errors. But we think we have no message to such now; still, 'he that hath an ear to hear, let him hear.' Our

message is to the Laodiceans; yet some of these hidden souls are being manifested.”

Here we see the views of the leading man in the message quite plainly expressed relative to the “shut door.” There cannot be found an utterance of Brother or Sister White’s previous to this time, so far as we can find from a careful perusal of this first volume of the *Review* or in the different numbers of *Present Truth*, which contradicts this definition of the shut door. Up to this time they still felt that their main work or message was to the old Advent believers, who had understood about the 2300 days, the glorious experience of ‘44, etc.

For a similar reason the disciples, after the crucifixion, labored for the Jews several years before they turned to the Gentiles, who knew nothing of the past work. Yet children who had come to accountability could be reached, and, says Brother White, God “will give every intelligent being a chance to be saved.”

Noble and sensible words were these. Therefore we are forced to conclude that he believed that those who had not rejected the light were not left out by the shut door doctrine as they held it. “We believe that God has reserved to Himself a *multitude* of precious souls, some even in the churches. These He will manifest *in His own time*.” (This emphasis is his own.) Does this look as if their ideas of the shut door excluded everybody but Advent believers? Our opposers tell us so; but we know better.

But it is said by some that Elder White has used in certain numbers of the *Present Truth* other language inconsistent with these statements. We will quote the very words to which they refer, from page 79 of No. 10 of *Present Truth*, published in Oswego, N. Y., May 1850:

[21]

“When we came up to that point of time [1844] all our sympathy, burden, and prayers for sinners ceased; and the unanimous feeling and testimony was that our work for the world was finished forever. The living branches on earth will sympathize and move in concert with the ‘True Vine’ in heaven. The reason why the living branches felt that their work was done for the world, was because the 2300 days were ended, and the time had come for Jesus to shut the door of the holy and pass into the most holy place, to receive the kingdom and to cleanse the sanctuary.

“‘But,’ says the objector, ‘the door of mercy will not be closed until Jesus comes.’ We do not read in the Bible of such a door as the door of mercy; neither do we teach that such a door was shut in 1844. ‘God’s mercy endureth forever.’ He is still merciful to His saints and ever will be; and Jesus is still their advocate and priest.

“‘But the sinner to whom Jesus had stretched out His arms all the day long, and who had rejected the offers of salvation, was left without an advocate when Jesus passed from the holy place and shut that door in 1844. The professed church who rejected the truth was also rejected.... Says the objector, ‘I believe that Jesus is still on the mercy seat.’ In answer to this oft-repeated assertion, let me say, Jesus never was on the mercy seat, and never will be. The mercy seat is in the most holy place, where Jesus entered at the end of the 2300 days. Its position is upon the ark of the ten commandments; and over it are the cherubim of glory. Before the mercy seat stands our great High Priest, pleading His blood for Israel. “‘If the door (represented by the door in the parable) is not shut until Jesus descends from heaven in flames of fire, then where will be the knocking and saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open unto us?’ It is evident that the door is shut prior to the second advent, and that unbelievers are ignorant of the fact of its being shut; therefore they knock at the shut door, and say, ‘Lord, Lord, open unto us.’ When the great day of God’s wrath is come, and unbelievers are apprised of their lost situation, they will not knock with a hope of being admitted. No, no! but they will flee to rock and mountains for shelter.”

We give these lengthy extracts from Brother White in order to fairly represent the very strongest expressions we have been able to find in all his early writings on the shut door subject. We do not propose to follow the example of opposers who sift out a few passages, the strongest expressions they can find in his language, and perhaps leave out the connection and other passages which would explain his meaning. But we give extracts covering all phases of the subject. Let us examine carefully this language:

1. It teaches that at the end of the 2300 days the ministration of our great High Priest changed from the sanctuary, and therefore a door was shut and another opened. S.D. Adventists believe this yet.

2. That this change of service and ministration constitutes a “real” change in the work of Christ. The examination of the books of

record on high commenced. The investigative judgment, the blotting out of sins, and their removal from the life records of all the children of God, began preparatory to those sins being placed upon the head of the antitypical scapegoat, Satan. This is a most important work, indeed; and it must be recognized by the people of God who will be ready for Christ’s coming. S. D. Adventists still believe this.

[22]

3. As we have stated over and over in these articles, when the believers came up to this important point in 1844, there was a universal feeling among them that their “work for the world was done.” Under the circumstances, how could they have thought otherwise? Should we have reason to expect anything less when this important transition occurred in the ministry of Christ? Would it be reasonable to suppose that, after preaching such a solemn message as they had been giving, they would still continue to feel just the same burden for sinners who had rejected their message as they had before? It would have proved that they had really no confidence in their own preaching if they had felt so.

4. It will be noticed by the careful reader that in these extracts the only classes Brother White speaks of as being “rejected” are sinners “to whom Jesus had stretched out his arms all the day long, who had rejected the offers of salvation,” and “the professed church, who rejected the truth.” In short, the very classes to whom the message of warning had been preached, but who had *rejected* it. In these remarks not one word can be found implying that those not yet come to years of accountability or those who had not rejected light were included among the ones shut out. S. D. Adventists still believe that those who deliberately refused the call will be lost. “None of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper.” [Luke 14:24](#).

We see, then, that these extracts, the strongest our opponents can bring, utterly fail to prove what they undertake to prove by them; viz., that Elder White taught that there was no salvation for any but those who had been in the first message. These words are in perfect harmony with the extract which we have given, written less than a year after, in which he expressly states his belief that a “multitude of precious souls” would yet be reached.

It is well known that the believers at this time firmly held that 144,000 souls would be “sealed with the seal of the living God” (the holy Sabbath), and would be translated from among the living when

Christ comes. There were supposed to be about 50,000 Adventists who came out of the churches in 1844. Many of these gave it up after the time passed. All can see, then, that these believers expected that more than 100,000 would have to be gathered in outside of the old Advent believers. How preposterous, then, for our opponents to claim that these Sabbathkeepers thought none but old Adventists could be saved after '44! These were evidently the "multitude" to whom Brother White referred in the previous extract.

To make these positions still more emphatic, we introduce extracts from Brother David Arnold, one of our oldest and most faithful brethren, published in December, 1849, just five months *after* the first number of the *Present Truth* was printed, and four months *before* these extracts from Brother White were written. On page 45 of the number for December, 1849, we find these passages:

[23] "Christ did close His daily, or continual, ministration or mediation in the first apartment of the heavenly sanctuary and 'shut the door' [emphasis his] which no man can open, and opened a door in the second apartment or holiest of all, which no man can shut (see Rev. 8:7, 8); and passed within the second vail, bearing before the Father, on the breastplate of judgment, all for whom he is now acting as Intercessor."

We inquire, Who are these for whom He is thus acting? We quote again: "'But,' says the objector, 'does not this leave the present generation who have passed the line of accountability since that time, without an intercessor or mediator, and leave them destitute of the means of salvation?' In reply to this objection, I would remark that, as they were then in a state of innocency, they were entitled to a record upon the breastplate of judgment as much as those who had sinned and received pardon, and therefore subjects of the present intercession of our great High Priest."

This was written five years after the time passed in 1844. There must have been more than a hundred million persons who had come to years of accountability during these five years after '44. Brother Arnold's position, which we know Brother White endorsed at the time by the fact of his printing it, made provision for the *possible* salvation of all of these. The same principle, though he does not here mention it, would give to everyone who had not neglected light the very same privilege.

The whole question, according to the views of the early believers, turned upon the nature of the work of Christ in the most holy place. They did believe, as we plainly see, that those arriving at years of accountability after Christ changed His ministration were subjects of grace. He pleads for them as well as for those who had accepted the truth before. Their names were included among those borne in on the breastplate of judgment. There is nothing that I can find in their writings which would forbid the idea that any who had not rejected the light, might not be borne in by our great High Priest, for whom He would plead in precisely the same manner. We grant that this point was not one that they said very much about at the time, as their whole work was directed to the “lost sheep of the house of Israel”—the believers in the first message.

It was, doubtless, in the order of God that those who had been familiar with the truths of the great time movement, and who had been baptized with its spirit, should be the first to hear the third angel’s message; just as it was that those who had heard John the Baptist and Christ, should hear the preaching of the apostles after the day of Pentecost. These were to form a nucleus for a great work, and they would be more firmly anchored in the truths of the message than novices could be. They would be able to assist in molding the new believers into the spirit of the work.

Hence, God so arranged that they should hear the last warning message first. That, as Brother White says, was the first burden they felt. They did not begin till afterward to labor for those “multitudes” who were yet to be brought in. This language of Brother Arnold, published before that which we quoted from Brother White, is positive proof that the leaders in the work did *not* believe in a shut door which would exclude all but old Advent believers. While they believed in an “open door” and a “shut door,” none were excluded but those who had rejected the light of truth. In our next we will present still more positive proof of this.—G. I. B.

## Chapter 8—“The Shut Door Doctrine Among the Believers in the Third Angel’s Message”

In No. 8 we gave extracts showing that what is called the “shut door” doctrine was held by the believers in 1850, ‘51. But we also clearly proved that it only excluded those who rejected the light. We quoted from Elder White’s language the very strongest expressions which our opponents can find by which they try to make it appear that none but the believers in ‘44 could be saved. We have seen how utterly they have failed to prove their position. We will now present other evidences confirming our statements. On page 72 of *Present Truth*, published in Oswego, N.Y., April, 1850, we have the following item:

“A very interesting work is now going on among the children of the ‘remnant’ in this city. Their salvation has been the principal subject of our meetings for the last two Sabbaths, and God has wonderfully blessed us. The truth has had a good effect on us as well as on our children. In the evening following the last first day we had a meeting for their special benefit, and the Spirit of the Lord was poured out in our midst. The children all bowed before the Lord, and seemed to feel the importance of keeping the commandments, especially the fifth, and of seeking salvation through Jesus Christ. This was one of the most interesting meetings that I ever witnessed.”

As this seems to be editorial matter (for there is no signature to it), it must have been from the pen of Elder White. This was published just one month before the article containing the lengthy extract from his pen which we quoted last week, and which contains those strong statements about the shut door, which opposers say prove that he believed there was no salvation for anybody but old Advent believers. Here we see him laboring, no doubt in connection with his wife, with the deepest interest for the dear children who were “seeking salvation.” This had been their principal work for two weeks. It had been a great blessing to them and the children.



Yet our opponents conclude from what he published a month later, that they believed none of these children could be saved, because they were not believers in ‘44. They were laboring with all their might for the salvation of those who they thought could not be saved! This may be their conclusion, but certainly it is not ours. We know, therefore, that they held no such views of the shut door as opposers attribute to them.

In the November number of *Present Truth*, pages 84, 85, we have an account of the conversion of young persons, and the baptism of one who must have been too young to have been a believer in 1844. This passage occurs in a letter of S. W. Rhodes’, who was a prominent laborer at that time, and shows what kind of a shut door they believed in.

On the last page of the last number of *Present Truth*, in a letter from Elder Joseph Bates, we find the following: “Our meeting at Waitsfield was blessed of God. Brother and Sister Butler came from Waterbury with brethren Chamberlain and Churchill; brethren Hart and Bailey came from Northfield; and those in the place, with Brother Lockwood’s family, composed our meeting. Brother Butler finally yielded to the truth.”

We personally remember this time as though it were but yesterday, although it was in 1850. Mother had been keeping the Sabbath about a year. Father was much opposed to it, though a strong believer in the great Advent movement of the past. The light on the sanctuary subject brought him to accept the seventh-day Sabbath.

[25]

We notice this meeting because the name of Brother Churchill is mentioned. His was one of the first cases of conversion from the world to the present truth, which occurred after 1844. As we have said, their work hitherto had been almost wholly for the “lost sheep of the house of Israel”—the old Advent believers. They saw that unbelievers showed no interest in the truths which were so precious to them, and therefore their attention was directed to those who loved the Advent faith, and they labored ardently for them. This, evidently, was in the order of God.

Heman Churchill, of Stowe, Vt., the one here mentioned, had not been engaged in the Advent movement of 1844. He had married, after this, a daughter of Sister Benson, a ‘44 Adventist. I remember him well as he came to Waterbury, Vt., and attended meeting in

my father's house, where a few met from time to time. They were quite surprised at first that one who had been an unbeliever should manifest an interest in the Advent doctrine.

He was not repulsed but welcomed. He was earnest and zealous; and as they discerned in him sincerity, they accepted him as a true convert. I cannot remember the exact date when he commenced to seek God, though I recollect clearly his attending meetings in Waterbury, Vt. But we know from this letter to Elder Bates that it was previous to the meeting held in the fall of 1850; for he was then at the meeting referred to in Waitsfield, Vt., as a believer. Brother Bates calls him "Brother." His conversion was noised abroad quite extensively.

Now if our opponents were correct in their statements that the believers held to a shut door which entirely excluded all except old Adventists, how could Heman Churchill have been received as a true convert? This is positive evidence that their assertions are untrue. There is not an instance which can be found in the early history of this cause where anyone manifesting sincerity in seeking God was ever repulsed. They were most glad of any evidence that such desired the blessing of God.

In a letter recently received from Brother Ira Abbey, of North Brookfield, N.Y., whose name is signed to the statement at the close of this article, I take the liberty of making the following extract:

"After the time passed I was a strong shut door believer. But when the third angels' message was preached, I, with my wife, embraced it. Between 1846 and 1850 Brother and Sister White came to our house, and were very zealous for the children and those that had not rejected the truth. They labored for unconverted souls, and never do I remember of hearing Sister White say that there were no hopes of the unconverted; but there were hopes of the backsliders and those that had not rejected the truth."

This is an extract from a private letter and was not written for publication; but the testimony is so clear we venture to insert it.

We next present an extract from a statement written by Marion C. Truesdail, and signed by herself and five others:

"During Miss Harmon's (now Mrs. White) visit to Paris, Me., in the summer of 1845, I stated to her the particulars of a dear friend  
[26] of mine whose father had prevented her attending our meetings;

consequently she had not rejected light. She smilingly replied, ‘God never has shown me that there is no salvation for such persons. It is only those who have had the light of truth presented to them and knowingly rejected it.’ Miss Harmon’s reply coincided with my idea of a shut door, and in justice no other could be derived from it.”

The fact here presented is certainly a decisive one as to the nature of the shut door in which they believed, even as early as 1845.

We now present a very explicit and comprehensive statement covering this whole shut door experience, of believers in the third angel’s message previous to the year 1851. There are a goodly number of living witnesses who embraced the truth at that early date, who *know* whether these statements are true or not. Why should not their testimony be considered in this connection? We have obtained the signatures of quite a number, all of whom embraced the truth as early as 1850, and all were in the ‘44 movement:

“We the undersigned, having been well acquainted with the Advent movement in 1844 at the passing of the time, and having also embraced the truths of the third angel’s message as early as 1850, hereby cheerfully subscribe our names to the following statement concerning the shut door doctrine held by believers in the third angel’s message from the time of its rise to the last mentioned date, and onward.

“They believed, in harmony with [Revelation 8:7, 8](#), and other scriptures, that at the close of the 2300 days of [Daniel 8:14](#) Christ closed His work in the first apartment of the heavenly sanctuary, and changed His ministration to the most holy, and entered upon the work of the judgment, changing His relation in this respect to the plan of salvation. Here was a door opened and a door shut.

“They believed that those who had the clear light upon the first angel’s message and turned against it, bitterly opposing it, were rejected of God. But they did *not* believe that those who had not had the light or those who had not come to years of accountability previous to 1844, if they should seek God with honest hearts, would be rejected.

“While they believed with William Miller and the great mass of Adventists *immediately* after the passing of the time, that their work for the world was done, and that the Lord would come *very* soon, yet after the light upon the sanctuary and the third message explained

their disappointment, they did *not* believe that mercy was past save for those who had rejected the light.”

J. B. Sweet	South Saginaw, Mich.
Samuel Martin	West Ridge, N. H.
Ira Abbey	North Brookfield, N. Y.
Mrs. R. B. Abbey	North Brookfield, N. Y.
Mrs. Diana Abbey	North Brookfield, N. Y.
Mrs. L. B. Abbey	North Brookfield, N. Y.
Herman S. Gurney	Memphis, Mich.
Ann E. Gurney	Memphis, Mich.
Wm. Gifford	Memphis, Mich.
Mrs. Mary S. Chase	Battle Creek, Mich.
Mrs. S. M. Howland	Battle Creek, Mich.
Mrs. F. H. Lunt	Battle Creek, Mich.
Mrs. Melora A. Ashley	Battle Creek, Mich.
Mrs. Caroline A. Dodge	Battle Creek, Mich.
Mrs. Sarah B. Whipple	Battle Creek, Mich.
Mrs. Uriah Smith	Battle Creek, Mich.
Mrs. Paulina R. Heligass	Moline, Kan.
R. G. Lockwood	St. Helena, Calif.
Mrs. R. G. Lockwood	St. Helena, Calif.
Ruben Loveland	North Hyde Park, Vt.
Mrs. Belinda Loveland	North Hyde Park, Vt.

[27] Here is an argument which it will be hard to answer—more than a score of living witnesses testifying clearly and emphatically to what they *know* concerning the shut door doctrine. On the other hand, our opponents who raise such a hue and cry about the shut door had no practical knowledge of the matter. They were not in the

movement themselves, and they have obtained at second hand what knowledge they have concerning it, while the witnesses we have quoted were actors in the message, and know whereof they affirm. We have demonstrated beyond all question that our opponents accuse the early believers falsely when they say they taught there was no salvation save for those who were Advent believers previous to 1844.—G. I. B.

[The Review and Herald, April 14, 1885](#) - Advent Experience—No.

## Chapter 9—“The Close of Probation to Those Who Reject Light”

While we have proved that the early believers in the third angel’s message did *not* believe in a shut door which excluded those who had not rejected light, we have freely admitted all the way through that they did believe that those who had willfully rejected the truth would not be saved. This may be thought by some to be an uncharitable view. We propose, therefore, to consider in this article what the Bible teaches relative to the closing of the probation of persons previous to the end of their natural lives.

We understand that God vouchsafes to every man a certain measure of light, varying in different ages and countries, according to circumstances. When this light is deliberately rejected, God withdraws His Spirit, and that person no longer feels its strivings with him. We need not say he could not be saved *if* he should repent. But under such circumstances they never *desire* to repent. True repentance is caused by the work of the Spirit of God as a reprover upon the heart. [John 16:7, 8](#). We cannot doubt that millions seal their eternal destinies in this manner.

The Antediluvians closed their probation before the flood came. The Lord said: “My Spirit shall not always strive with man.” “The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth. Make thee an ark of gopher wood,” etc. [Genesis 6:3, 13, 14](#). They would not yield to the strivings of the Spirit; therefore God rejected them, and withdrew His Spirit from them. This occurred long before the rain began to fall. So it was with Sodom and Gomorrah. They had passed the boundary line of God’s mercy before the fire from heaven fell upon them.

In many of the experiences of the children of Israel the same principles were illustrated. When they murmured, and found fault, and rebelled over and over, they came at last to a point where they had done so once too much. [Numbers 13 and 14](#) contain a forcible

illustration. The spies returned with an evil report, and the people believed them, and said, “Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt.” They would not listen to the counsel of Caleb and Joshua. God said to them: “Ye shall bear your iniquities even forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise,” “Ye shall not come into the land, concerning which I swear to make you dwell therein, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun.”

The fiat had gone forth, and their temporal destiny was fixed. We may hope that some of them repented of their sins and may be saved; but the decision was made that they should never see the land of promise, and they never did enter it. Their wanderings were typical of those of many others who should imitate their conduct in the spiritual life.

[28]

Over and over we are warned by their example, lest we should also fail as they did. So also in the later history of that nation. The ten tribes known as “Ephraim” (because that was the leading tribe) backslid till the mercy of God was withdrawn. “Israel slideth back as a backsliding heifer.... Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone.” [Hosea 4:16, 17](#). The awful results which followed, proved that God’s protecting hand had been withdrawn.

Judas Iscariot passed the line of his probation at quite a period before his death. When Christ said of him, “It had been good for that man if he had not been born,” his day of grace had passed.

Our Saviour teaches that those who blaspheme against the Holy Spirit have never forgiveness “neither in this world, neither in the world to come.” [Matthew 12:31, 32](#). And St. Paul tells us of a class who “crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame;” and that it is impossible to “renew them again unto repentance.” [Hebrews 4:6, 7](#).

Who can doubt but that the Jewish rulers who had seen the mighty works of Christ, who had conspired against Him and put Him to death, and said, “His blood be on us and on our children,” had passed the line of mercy? Their judgment lingered for years, but overtook them at last in the terrible calamities which came upon that people. God waited because there were honest souls to be gathered out from among the rejected ones. The whole wicked world will close their probation previous to Christ’s appearing.

When our Saviour closes His ministry as a priest, He announces it in the solemn words: “He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly,” etc. [Revelation 22:11, 12](#). The probation of every person is then closed forever; and this is before Christ appears.

Here we see the general principles upon which God conducts His moral government. He holds out overtures of grace to the perishing. He entreats them to come and be saved. But if these mercies are despised and His tender love scorned, at last He ceases to plead for them. He leaves them to have their own way. Such will say: “The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.” [Jeremiah 8:20](#).

There is a class to whom the Lord will say: “Because I have called and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof; I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh.” “Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me.” [Proverbs 1:24-26, 28](#). Who can deny that there are many such whose probation is practically closed, so far as any hope of reaching them is concerned?

[29] If these things be true upon general principles, it is still more clear that those who reject special warnings reject their own salvation. Thus our Saviour, in speaking of the work of John the Baptist ([Luke 7:29, 30](#)), declares: “And all the people that heard him and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him.” “The publicans justified God” by accepting the work of Him whose mission had been foretold by prophecy. When He came as the prophet said He would, they received Him. They were found in harmony with God’s work. “But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves” by rejecting this same work.

It is a serious matter to be found out of harmony with the work of God foretold by prophecy. When we willfully reject such a work, we reject God, the Author of the work, and therefore cause our own rejection. Hear the piteous cry of our Saviour as He beholds the doomed city: “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets,



and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.” [Matthew 23:37, 38](#). “If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.” [Luke 19:42](#). Here the dear Saviour, weeping in anguish, beholds them blindly closing their own probation, and He cannot save them.

How do these plain principles apply to the experience of 1844? Here was one of the most important movements ever foretold in prophecy. It announced to the world that the “hour of God’s judgment” was reached, that the greatest prophetic period of the Bible was closed, that Christ would soon appear in glory, and that the great day of God’s wrath was about to begin. This warning message went to all parts of the earth. Thousands were engaged in proclaiming it, and tens of thousands embraced it. It went with a power not seen in the church for ages. Multitudes of sinners and skeptics were converted by it. It bore all the marks of a genuine Heaven-sent message.

The proclamation made at that time marked the transition of our great High Priest from the general work of pleading for man before the Father, to the special work of blotting out the sins of all His people from the books of God’s remembrance, and closing the period of probation forever. No event in our Saviour’s work could be of greater importance than this. Kings and prophets had looked forward to this work of judgment with the deepest interest. Was not this movement as important as that of John the Baptist? His was proclaimed by one man, in a few months’ time, over territory less in size than some of our states, to a comparatively small population. This was preached by thousands. It went to the uttermost parts of the earth, and was a fulfillment of many important prophecies. Millions upon millions heard it. Those who rejected John’s message rejected the counsel of God against their own souls. How much more evident, then, that the same effect would follow the rejection of this greater light!

This time message, based upon prophecy, was the first of a series of three which constitute the closing warning to the world, and bring us to Christ’s coming. [Revelation 14:6-16](#). These are closely linked

together, each presenting features of the deepest interest to mankind. The same series is presented in one of our Saviour's parables. [Luke 14:16-24](#).

[30] "A certain man made a great supper, and bade many; and sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready. And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it; I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them; I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.

"So that servant came, and showed his lord these things. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. For I say unto you, that none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper."

Here are represented the three calls to the marriage supper of the Lamb. These correspond to the three messages. The servant is sent out at "supper time," which is at the close of the day. In the first call, excuse is made. Some worldly object was more important to them than being a guest at the supper. The *compelling* message corresponds to the third of the series of [Revelation 14](#). Its truths are very plain, but very unpopular, and contrary to our worldly interests; and none but those whose consciences compel them to do so will heed it.

Mark the solemn words: "*For I say unto you, that none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper.*" The rejection of that solemn judgment call, is the rejection "of the counsel of God against themselves," just the same as in the time of John the Baptist. "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.*" [Isaiah 66:5](#). "That evil servant who shall say in his heart, My Lord delayeth his coming," "shall be beaten with many stripes." That class who cry, "Peace and safety," when

the faithful servants are giving the message of the Lord, will not be prepared. “As the days of Noah were, so also shall the coming of the Son of man be.” Those who refused the light were rejected of God.

These and many other scriptures clearly demonstrate that terrible consequences follow the rejection of the light concerning the coming of Christ. Is it, then, any wonder that the believers in 1844 attached importance to the light which God had given them? Is it any wonder that they concluded that those who hated and rejected that light brought the frown of God upon themselves? How could they have concluded otherwise?

They could not, unless they admitted at the same time that the truth they loved was of no importance. This they could not do without stultifying themselves, and condemning their glorious experience. They saw the same spirit in their opposers which characterized the ancient Jews who rejected John’s preaching. Therefore, they came to the same conclusion concerning them that Christ taught concerning the opposing Jews, and so believed them to be rejected of God.

In all our extensive acquaintance with this work, traveling from Maine to California, from Minnesota to Texas, and seeing many thousands of believers at our large camp meetings, we have never yet known one who had bitterly opposed the first messages, who ever embraced the third. Therefore the result proves that the position taken by the believers was right. Those who rejected the light of God were rejected by Him.—G. I. B.

*Ellen G. White Estate*

*Silver Spring, Maryland*

*Retyped November 4, 1993*

*At the time of the writing of these articles Elder Butler was president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. In these ten Review and Herald articles he recounts the experiences of the Advent believers from 1844 to 1851, with special emphasis on the Shut Door and the rise of the Third Angel’s Message.*

[31]