

**"The Shut Door Doctrine Among the Believers
in the Third Angel's Message" p. 1, par. 1, [NUM6].**

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. p. 1, par. 2, [NUM6].

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. p. 1, par. 3, [NUM6].

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.: p. 1, par. 4, [NUM6].

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." p. 1, par. 5, [NUM6].

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. p. 1, par. 6, [NUM6].

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. p. 2, par. 1, [NUM6].

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. p. 2, par. 2, [NUM6].

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. p. 2, par. 3, [NUM6].

6. That the vision of Mrs. E. G. White so often quoted is in perfect harmony with these positions. p. 2, par. 4, [NUM6].

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. p. 2, par. 5, [NUM6].

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: p. 2, par. 6, [NUM6].

"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." p. 3, par. 1, [NUM6].

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. p. 3, par. 2, [NUM6].

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. p. 3, par. 3, [NUM6].

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. p. 3, par. 4, [NUM6].

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." p. 4, par. 1, [NUM6].

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. p. 4, par. 2, [NUM6].