

Advent Movement Survey 1 of 20

The Disappointment - Shut and Open Door

#1386

Study given by W.D. Frazee - December 1, 1962

The Advent Movement Survey, as you can see, is a study of things that have happened in this advent movement. It is not intended to be an exhaustive course in denominational history. (I hope that all of you have some acquaintance with the history of this people.) But it is intended to survey the history of God's people since 1844, focusing especially on certain important points that have a direct bearing upon our duty today.

Now, just to review some things that should be familiar to us: In Revelation the 14th chapter, we have the last work of God here in this world, represented under the figure of three angels giving warning messages (Revelation 14:6-14).

Immediately following, Jesus comes. The first angel gives the announcement of the present judgment; the second angel of the fall of Babylon; the third angel the warning against the beast, image, and mark, presenting those who keep the commandments of God. These messages, while they are being given simultaneously and together today, arose at certain times, not all at the same time.

Who was the leader who led out in the giving of the first angel's message here in the United States? William Miller. You remember it was in 1831 that he gave his first public presentation of the truth of the near coming of Jesus, based on the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation. The great scripture that was the text of many of the sermons of those who gave that message was Daniel 8:14. Let's say it together:

"Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall
the sanctuary be cleansed" Daniel 8:14.

Now, that focused eventually on the 22nd day of October 1844, when those prophetic days came to an end. And believing that the earth was the sanctuary, they felt that Jesus was going to come that day, the 22nd of October, and cleanse this earth, the sanctuary, by fire, making an end of sin and sinners. And so they were looking for the end of all things the 22nd day of October 1844.

Jesus, of course, did not come. There occurred what we call the great disappointment; and it was a great disappointment. But you know, that day, the 22nd of October 1844, is our birthday. Now, it seems strange for a religious movement to look to its birthday as the day of the great disappointment, but that's true, historically.

And, in connection with that, it might be well for us to remember that the Christian church, as a whole, must look to the great disappointment as its birthday, because when Jesus died on the cross on the 14th of Abib in the year A.D. 31, His

followers were all greatly disappointed, weren't they? Yes. But without that death of Christ on the cross in A.D. 31, there would have been no Christian church, right? And no salvation. And we all, as Christians, look back to the cross as the foundation of our faith. Is that right?

But remember that when Jesus died, His followers were greatly disappointed. Many of them lost faith and hope. They were bitterly disappointed and knew not where to turn. But Jesus took those poor, disappointed disciples, and revealed His purposes to them in such a way that they became the heralds of His message, and carried the glorious truth of His death, resurrection, ascension and intercession, and the promise of His return to all the world.

So, in 1844, our spiritual forefathers – those who listened to and accepted the preaching of William Miller and the others with him – experienced a great disappointment. They thought Christ was coming October 22. He didn't come. They knew not where to turn. Among that group that had that great disappointment, were those whom God finally led to see what His purpose in the message was: why they had been disappointed, and what had happened. Those formed the nucleus of what we now call the Seventh-day Adventist church.

Now, in the early history of this movement there took place what was to have a great influence in its work all through the years; the revelation of the Spirit of Prophecy. In December 1844, in Portland, Maine, Ellen Harmon was given a vision. You find that in *Early Writings*. In fact, it is the very first thing in the book after a few words of introduction. It begins on page 14. I'd like to have you turn to that page, and I want you to notice this first vision. We have some Bible texts to look at, but I want first to get the picture before you of some things that are stated in this first vision:

“While I was praying at the family altar, the Holy Ghost fell upon me, and I seemed to be rising higher and higher, far above the dark world. I turned to look for the advent people in the world, but could not find them, when a voice said to me, ‘Look again, and look a little higher.’ At this I raised my eyes, and saw a straight and narrow path, cast up high above the world. On this path the advent people were traveling to the city, which was at the farther end of the path” *Early Writings*, page 14.

Once in a while, I wish I were an artist. This is a picture I'd like to paint. To me, it is one of the most wonderful scenes of which we have a word picture in the writings of inspiration.

Remember, here was a young girl of only 17. She was a part of a disappointed group who had expected Jesus to come on the 22nd of October. And here, a few weeks after, as she with some others is praying at the altar of prayer, the family altar, the Spirit of God comes upon her, and she's given a view.

What is it that she sees? She sees a path:

“A straight and narrow path cast up high above the world. On this path the advent people were traveling to the city which was at the farther end of the path” *Ibid.*

You can all picture it in your minds, can't you?

The next sentence is one that I want you to notice very carefully:

“They had a bright light set up behind them at the beginning of the path, which an angel told me was the midnight cry” *Ibid.*

You have your *Early Writings*, I wish you'd read that sentence with me. All together:

“They had a bright light set up behind them at the beginning of the path, which an angel told me was the midnight cry” *Ibid.*

What was behind them? A bright light. Where was it with reference to this pathway? It was at the beginning. There is something that marks the beginning of this movement, dear friends. What is it? The midnight cry. The next sentence says:

“This light shone all along the path” *Ibid.*

How far, then, does the light shine? It shines clear to the city.

“And gave light for their feet so that they might not stumble. If they kept their eyes fixed on Jesus, who was just before them, leading them to the city, they were safe. But soon some grew weary, and said the city was a great way off, and they expected to have entered it before. Then Jesus would encourage them by raising His glorious right arm, and from His arm came a light which waved over the advent band, and they shouted, ‘Alleluia!’ Others rashly denied the light behind them” *Ibid.*

What did some do with reference to this light? They *denied* it.

“And said that it was not God that had led them out so far. The light behind them went out, leaving their feet in perfect darkness, and they stumbled and lost sight of the mark and of Jesus, and fell off the path down into the dark and wicked world below” *Ibid.*

Now, what happened to these people that denied this light behind them? The light went out. It was no more light to them, for they denied it. And what happened to them as far as the path is concerned? They fell *off* the path. Where'd they fall? Down into the dark and wicked world below.

I want to give you a sentence that is in the original vision as given in *Word to the Little Flock*. I will speak more of this presently. But there is a sentence that comes in there. It reads like this. I will read the sentence before, so you get the picture:

“Others rashly denied the light behind them and said that it was not God that had lead them out so far. The light behind them went out, leaving their feet in perfect darkness and they stumbled and got their eyes off the mark and lost sight of Jesus and fell off the path down in the dark and wicked world below. It was just as impossible for them to get on the path again and go to the city as all the wicked world which God had rejected. They fell all the way along the path one after another until we heard the voice of God like many waters which gave us the day and hour of Jesus’ coming” *Word to the Little Flock*, page 14.

If you’re following in *Early Writings*, page 15, you see that we’ve picked up again some of the wording there. But I want you to notice that sentence about these that lost sight of Jesus, that denied the light behind them, said that it wasn’t God that had led them out so far, that fell off the path, it says:

“It was just as impossible for them to get on the path again and go to the city as all the wicked world which God had rejected” *Ibid*.

I’d like you to study that sentence. There are several *reasons* I want you to study it. I’ll speak of them presently.

Remember, this vision was given what year? 1844. What month? December. This said that the midnight cry was light. Well, I wonder what that midnight cry was, and I wonder why it’s so important that it’s spoken of as light at the beginning of the pathway, that gives light all the way to the city. I wonder what there is about it that makes it so that the people who walk in it go all the way through, and the ones that deny it fall off that path – down, down, down into the dark and wicked world below. And those that deny that light and fall back into the dark and wicked world below, it is what? Impossible to get on the path again and go to the city.

There’s something else that’s impossible. The dark and wicked world that God has rejected, it’s impossible for *them* to get on that path. I wonder what that means. Do *you* know what that means? Now, let’s see if we can find out what the midnight cry is. If you were going to find the midnight cry in the Bible, what book would you go to? Matthew 25. Well, let’s go there. You say that it’s in Matthew 25. Will you tell me what *verse* the midnight cry is in Matthew 25? The 6th verse. What is the midnight cry?

“Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him”
Matthew 25:6.

How do you know it's the midnight cry? Well, that's what the verse says, at midnight there was a cry made. It's a cry and it's at midnight, so it's called "the midnight cry."

"Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh" Matthew 25:6-13.

Had William Miller and the other preachers been using this parable in 1844? Oh yes, they had been using it, particularly in the summer and fall of 1844. You see, they had expected Jesus to come, first in the Jewish year 1843, which went from the spring of 1843 to the spring of 1844. But when the spring of 1844 passed and He hadn't come, they experienced the first disappointment, and there was a tarrying. And while the bridegroom tarried, they all what? Slumbered and slept. But at midnight, there was a cry made.

Halfway between the spring and the fall, along in the summer, light came that the real ending of the 2,300 days would not come until the fall of that year, 1844. And careful study led them to locate the event as taking place on the 22nd day of October 1844. That was the tenth day of the seventh month, Jewish time. And what was the tenth day of the seventh month in the old Jewish ritual? The day of atonement, the day of the cleansing of the sanctuary. As Christ was crucified on the day the Passover lamb was slain, as He had risen on the day of the wave sheaf, so they reasoned that the day of atonement, antitypically, would come on the tenth day of the seventh month, or the day of atonement. And in this they were correct. So the 2,300 days ended October 22, 1844.

As I say, light on this came to them in the summer of 1844, and as that light came with great power, the message was given, "Behold the bridegroom cometh [on the 22nd day of October 1844]; go ye out to meet him." Then all the virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. There was a great awakening. The message went like fire in the stubble, and thousands upon thousands literally heard the message, the advent

message, that Christ was coming on the 22nd day of October, 1844. Now, of course, they expected the bridegroom to appear on the 22nd day of October, and they expected they would go in with Him.

You notice in the parable it says that:

“The bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut” Matthew 25:10.

In connection with the coming of the bridegroom, then, there would be what happening to the door? The shutting of the door.

As I said, the disappointment of October 22 was terrible. The question at once was, “Where are we? Did anything happen? Why didn’t He come?” They had staked everything on His coming. They expected Him to come. Some had sold everything they had and used the money to spread the message. What were they to do? Some, of course, rashly gave up the whole thing. Others said, “Well, we were mistaken. He didn’t come. Perhaps the date isn’t right.” But among a number of the advent preachers and believers, there was a deep conviction that something had happened the 22nd day of October 1844. And although they had to recognize that Christ had not come to this earth in glory, they *did* come to the conclusion that something had happened.

I want to read you something interesting from William Miller. It’s found in a periodical called *The Advent Review*, which was published a few years later by the pioneers of this movement. On page 8 of this *Advent Review*, is a copy of a letter that Brother Miller wrote December 11, 1844. How long is that after the disappointment? Just a few weeks.

“Dear Brother Himes,

“Be patient. Establish your heart, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh” *The Advent Review*, page 8.

Then he quotes other texts, quite a number of them. Then he says this. Listen:

“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 by 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 unjust, the righteous and wicked, between those who love His appearing and those who hate Him. And never, since the days of the apostles, has there been

such a division line drawn as was drawn about the tenth or twenty-third day of the seventh Jewish month” *Ibid.*

It’s Brother Miller’s expression, “shut the door” that I want you to notice. Though Christ had not come the 22nd of October, what did Brother Miller say he believed had happened? The door was shut. And he refers to Revelation 22:10-12. What is Revelation 22:10-12 talking about? The close of probation. Does the prophecy there in Revelation indicate that probation closes a short time before Jesus actually appears? And since the event that they were looking for hadn’t happened – Christ hadn’t actually appeared – many of them believed now that what had happened on that day? Probation had closed. Or as they worded it, He had done what? Shut the door. Is that the language of the parable? Yes.

“The bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut” Matthew 25:10.

Now, I want to ask you a few questions. Did the bridegroom come? Some of you nod your heads this way and some this way. Was the door shut? Does it make any *difference* whether the door was shut or not?

It is an interesting thing that not too long after this letter of Brother Miller’s, in April of 1845, a number of the leading Adventist ministers got together at Albany, New York, and held a conference. The consensus of opinion was that the door was *not* shut; that nothing of any particular importance had happened on the 22nd day of October 1844; that they had simply been mistaken; and like honest men, they should *admit* that they were mistaken and go ahead and give the message of the second coming of Christ until they had clearer light, if ever they would, as to just when He would come.

While those who had followed William Miller were broken up into a number of factions, the body, if we can speak of a body, followed Miller and Himes and others in that conclusion. And in doing it, they gave up their faith in the idea that anything particular happened on the 22nd of October 1844. They knew they had been sincere in preaching that message, but they now felt that they were mistaken. Christ had been looked for, but He hadn’t come.

It’s interesting some of the things that led them to those conclusions. You notice that William Miller, in December, had said:

“God in His providence has shut the door, and we can only stir one another up to be patient” *The Advent Review*, page 8.

Just a little after that, in a letter that he wrote February 19, 1845, he says:

“I have received a number of letters from almost every part of the country, asking what I thought of the experience we had in what was called the seventh month.

And also what was my opinion concerning the closing of the door of mercy, or probation for sinners" *Ibid.*, page 10.

Then he answers it at some length, and he goes over his calculations. And he believes still that the Lord has led in the movement and that Christ is coming very, very soon. Then he says:

"You ask why I do not show whether the probation of sinners is ended. I answer, it is a close point, and if handled at all, it ought to be done very wisely and with a great deal of humility" *Ibid.*

Then he goes ahead to prove that probation closes a little time before Jesus comes, and he thinks that they are now in that time. Then he deals with a view which should come in, that Christ had come as the bridegroom, according to the parable of the virgins. He says:

"I do believe in the main, that they are right. Has Christ come in the sense spoken of in Matthew 25:10?" *Ibid.*

Look in your Bible, Matthew 25:10. What coming of Christ is spoken of there? Coming as what? As the *bridegroom*. All right, now listen carefully to this:

"Has Christ come in the sense spoken of in Matthew 25:10?" I think He has" *Ibid.*

What did Miller think in February of 1845? That Christ had come as the bridegroom, when? October 22, 1844.

"Has Christ come in the sense spoken of in Matthew 25:10?" I think He has. Was the contract finished, and when? My opinion is that it was on or about the tenth day of the seventh month when the great majority of those who were looking for Christ dedicated themselves and all they had to the Lord. There was a division line drawn then. Many who were in deep distress for a preparation to meet Christ at that time, have gone back since the time passed, and have become the most shameful scoffers and the greatest persecutors we have among us" *The Advent Review*, page 10.

Now listen:

"And I have not seen a genuine conversion since" *Ibid.*

Now this was February. They had been looking for Christ to come when? October 22. So through November, December, January, February, nearly four months had passed, and William Miller said:

“And I have not seen a genuine conversion since. A number who were converted at that time and before, remain steadfast; looking and praying for Christ to come” *Ibid.*

Listen to Miller:

“If I am correct, you will see a general and powerful struggle among our nominal sects for revivals in a short time, but it will prove a failure. No one will be made truly pious. They will knock and say, Lord, Lord, open unto us. They will make many pharisaical prayers, but will not be heard. And soon the Saviour will come in person” *Ibid.*

So, William Miller was looking for Jesus to come right away, and he still felt that their seventh month experience was what? Genuine and from the Lord, and that the bridegroom had come in some sense, and that the door was shut. One of the reasons he uses to prove it is that he had not seen what during those four months? Not seen a genuine conversion. So, he says:

“I believe that probation is closed, that the door is shut, and that any time we can expect Jesus to come” *Ibid.*

Meanwhile, a number of the believers (communications weren't as easy then as they are now), had given up their belief in the midnight cry and the experience of 1844, as being the truth. Among these was Ellen Harmon and the group up in Portland, Maine. I am going to prove that, by reading a little statement from James White in *Word to the Little Flock*. I want you to see what he says about this. James White says, concerning Ellen Harmon, who later became his wife:

“When she received her first vision December, 1844, she and all the band in Portland, Maine, where her parents then resided, had given up the midnight cry and shut door as being in the past. It was then that the Lord showed her, in vision, the error into which she and the band in Portland had fallen. She, then, related her vision to the band, and about sixty confessed their error and acknowledged their seventh month experience to be the work of God” *Word to the Little Flock*, page 22.

You may wonder why I'm spending so much time on these details. I think you will see before we have studied in this class very long, this is fundamental to our understanding of several things. I'll come to that a little later. But now notice: Ellen Harmon and the group up in Portland, Maine, when Christ didn't come on the 22nd of October, what did they do with reference to the midnight cry and shut door as being in the past? They gave it up. Where do you suppose they were looking for it, then? In the future.

Now think of yourself. Suppose you had been back there and you were expecting Jesus to come. He was going to come and shut the door on the 22nd of

October. And everybody that was in would be in, and everyone that was out would be out. And so you come up to that time. You make your last appeal to your friends and loved ones that haven't accepted. And all that respond, they, with you, are looking for Jesus to come. To the others, you have said goodbye.

All right, now, He doesn't come. What do you conclude? You're mistaken. And therefore, you think that the bridegroom is going to come, when? In the future. And the door is going to be shut, when? In the future. But when you say that, then you have to go around to your friends that you talked to the week before, and the month before, and say, we were mistaken; we thought the bridegroom was coming on the 22nd of October, but He didn't come. We thought the door was going to be shut, but it wasn't shut. Do you see, to say that the bridegroom didn't come, and to say that the door wasn't shut is to say we were mistaken in that movement and in that message. To state it in another way, it would be to say we gave the right message at the wrong time.

I can illustrate it this way. Suppose we get a message on the telephone, and it says, "Please go down and meet the 9 o'clock train at the station tonight, because there's someone coming in on the train. John Jones is coming on the train. Please meet him and bring him out to the sanitarium." We go down there, and we look and look, and no John Jones appears. What do we conclude? There was some mistake in the message, and we suppose if he's coming, he's coming, when? Later on, some *other* train. He will be here, but not on *that* train. He didn't come. There was a mistake.

So you can see how that thousands of the dear people back then, they just reasoned that out very simply. They said, "We were looking for the bridegroom to come on October 22. He didn't come; He's coming later on. We expected that the door would be shut on the 22nd of October, but it isn't shut, and therefore the message we gave was a mistake. That wasn't the *time* for the midnight cry. This wasn't the *time* for the coming of the bridegroom." Do you see how that all fits together? It is very important that you see that. And so, there were those who felt that the door was shut and those who felt that it *wasn't* shut. There were those who felt that the bridegroom had come and those who felt that He *hadn't*.

But now watch. This says that this vision which she received showed her and the others the error into which they had fallen; and they confessed their error and acknowledged their seventh month experience to be the work of God. What was there in that first vision (we read it here a little while ago, in *Early Writings*, page 14), that showed them that the thing was all right the way they had given it, and the way God had *inspired* them to give it? What was it? What was there in that first vision? Look at it there in *Early Writings*, page 14. Tell me, what do you see there that would cause them, when they had been disappointed and thought that they were mistaken, to see that the message they gave was the right message at the right time? What was there in this message, this vision? Now, listen as I read it:

"I turned to look for the advent people in the world, but could not find them, when a voice said to me, 'Look again, and look a little higher.' At this I raised my eyes, and saw a straight and narrow path, cast up high above

the world. On this path the advent people were traveling to the city, which was at the farther end of the path. They had a bright light set up behind them at the beginning of the path, which an angel told me was the midnight cry. This light shone all along the path” *Early Writings*, page 14.

Where did God show her the midnight cry? In back of them. But now because they had been disappointed, they had *given up* the midnight cry and shut door as being in the past. But, now comes the vision and says, don’t give up your faith. Hold fast because this truth you’ve been preaching, that the bridegroom is to come on the 22nd day of October, 1844, and shut the door, that’s the midnight cry, and that is light. And you are now to do what, with that light? Walk in that light. And it’ll shine *how far*? All the way to the city. Now notice:

“But some grew weary, and said the city was a great way off, and they expected to have entered it before. Then Jesus would encourage them by raising His glorious right arm, and from His arm came a light which waved over the advent band, and they shouted, ‘Alleluia!’ Others rashly denied the light behind them” *Ibid.*, pages 14-15.

What was that? The midnight cry.

“And said that it was not God that had led them out so far” *Ibid.*, page 15.

“It was simply human influence,” they said. “We were mistaken. It wasn’t God that told us to preach that midnight cry.” What happened?

“The light behind them went out, leaving their feet in perfect darkness, and they stumbled and lost sight of the mark and of Jesus, and fell off the path down into the dark and wicked world below” *Ibid.*

According to this, was it a serious matter to go *back* on that message? Was it? How serious? It was a life and death matter. The people who had given that message, and seen that light, and then repudiated it just because they were disappointed, they were, what? They were lost. They fell off the path down into the dark and wicked world below.

Well, I wonder how in the world you could keep your faith in a message which said the bridegroom was coming on the 22nd day of October, 1844, and then He didn’t come? There’d have to be some revelation that would come to you, that would show you what that meant, and where He *did* come to, wouldn’t it? Did that happen? Oh yes, thank the Lord.

Now, I leave that for the moment, and I want to come to this expression about the shut door. Matthew says:

“The bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut” Matthew 25:10.

Did the bridegroom come October 22? Was the door shut? That’s what William Miller had first thought. Later, he changed his mind. What was it that caused William Miller to change his mind? Some of his friends helped him, but another thing that helped him was he began to see people converted. He said, “Well, I guess the door isn’t shut.”

Now I am seeking to awaken questions in your mind as well as get some questions answered. There are three reasons that I want you to study, carefully, this question of the shut door in 1844.

The first is because it is one of the important points in the beginning of this message. You don’t understand this movement unless you understand the shut door in 1844.

The second, this is one of the great points on which our opponents criticize the Spirit of Prophecy. Those who attack Ellen G. White and her inspiration, work hard on this point. They say that Sister White, along with the other pioneers of this message, believed that probation closed October 22, 1844. And they say that later on, about seven years later, she and the others changed their minds, but that during the seven years from 1844 - 1851, Ellen White and the pioneers taught that probation closed on October 22, 1844. You need to know what she taught and what she didn’t teach, you need to know what the pioneers believed and what they didn’t believe, in order to answer the criticisms. Have we been told that every position of our faith will be searched into, and that we’ll need to give the answers for our faith?

Now some of you, as you listen to this tonight, may feel, “Well this is a bit deep for me.” Stay with us, friends, and it will get not less deep, but you’ll see through it. It *is* deep. But if you will study these references that we’re giving you in *Early Writings*, and that I’m going to give you in *Great Controversy* and the Bible (some of you will want to study some of the other material available), you can understand this thing. And you *need* to understand it.

Now, the first reason I gave you was, what? It’s an important point in the beginning of this movement to understand how the movement began. And second? To deal with the criticisms against the Spirit of Prophecy. And third (and this is perhaps most important), if you understand the shut door, you will understand what makes this movement, the Seventh-day Adventist movement, different from all the other churches. Then you will understand why the experience that God wants you to have at this time, is something that can be found only in this movement.

And so, with that, I want you to focus your mind on seeking to understand what happened in 1844; what the pioneers of the message taught, and what Ellen Harmon, later Ellen G. White, said the Lord had showed her in vision.

Now, we have just read here, that the very first vision she had, told her that the midnight cry was, what? Light. And that it was light that shown *how far*? All the

way to the city. And the midnight cry had said that Jesus was coming as the bridegroom, when? October 22, 1844. And according to Matthew 25:10, when the bridegroom came, they that were ready went in with Him to the marriage, and the door was shut.

You might be interested to know that, for a number of years, in the early history of our movement, we were known as “The Seventh-day Sabbath and Shut Door People.” Was that a good name? I wonder.

Turn in your *Early Writings* to page 42:

“Sabbath, March 24, 1849, we had a sweet and very interesting meeting with the brethren at Topsham, Maine. The Holy Ghost was poured out upon us, and I was taken off in the Spirit to the city of the living God. Then I was shown that the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ relating to the shut door could not be separated” *Early Writings*, page 42.

Does she speak of the shut door as something important? She puts it along with the commandments of God.

I want to ask you something, you folks who give Bible studies. If you loaned *Early Writings* to somebody, and they'd be reading it, and they'd come to this page and asked you what that meant, what would you tell them? You'd understand the commandments of God, all right, wouldn't you? You understand the testimony of Jesus. What *is* the testimony of Jesus? Yes, the Spirit of Prophecy. But suppose they would say to you “What does that mean, the testimony of Jesus Christ relating to the shut door?” What is the testimony of Jesus relating to the shut door? What would you tell them? Is that important? You probably had better know.

Then she goes on and says:

“The time for the commandments of God to shine out with all their importance, and for God's people to be tried on the Sabbath truth, was when the door was opened in the most holy place in the heavenly sanctuary, where the ark is” *Ibid*.

So there's something about this matter of the shut door that has to do with the light on the Sabbath question. I wonder why that is? Now let's see if we can find some light on this in the book *Great Controversy*:

“This subject was not understood by Adventists in 1844”
Great Controversy, page 429.

(She's talking about the work in the two apartments.)

“After the passing of the time when the Saviour was expected, they still believed His coming to be near; they

held that they had reached an important crisis and that the work of Christ as man's intercessor before God had ceased" *Ibid.*

I read you that from William Miller, didn't I?

"It appeared to them to be taught in the Bible that man's probation would close a short time before the actual coming of the Lord in the clouds of heaven. This seemed evident from those scriptures which point to a time when men will seek, knock, and cry at the door of mercy, and it will not be opened. And it was a question with them whether the date to which they had looked for the coming of Christ might not rather mark the beginning of this period which was immediately to precede His coming" *Great Controversy*, page 429.

Then it says that they had given the warning of the judgment; they lost their burden for souls; they felt their work for the world was done.

"All this confirmed them in the belief that probation had ended, or, as they then expressed it, 'the door of mercy was shut'" *Great Controversy*, page 429.

Now our opposers try to make out that we hide the fact that our pioneers believed this, but here it is in *Great Controversy*, millions of copies of which have been circulated. We freely admit that our pioneers believed, for a time, that probation closed, when? October 22, 1844. But now notice:

"But clearer light came with the investigation of the sanctuary question. They now saw that they were correct in believing that the end of the 2300 days in 1844 marked an important crisis. But while it was true that that door of hope and mercy by which men had for eighteen hundred years found access to God, was closed, another door was opened" *Great Controversy*, pages 429-430.

Was there a shut door in 1844? Was there an *open* door, too? Yes. Which do you think they saw first? The shut door. And if you had been coming to a door that had been opened for 1800 years, probably that would be the first thing you'd notice would be the shutting of that door, wouldn't it? Then later, they saw clearly the *open* door. This is referred to in Revelation the third chapter, and I'd like you to turn to that now:

"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" Revelation 3:7-8.

The Spirit of Prophecy applies this directly to the advent people right there in the year 1844. You will find that in *Great Controversy*, page 435. It applies this text to God's people at that time, and it says that men sought to close the door which God had opened, and to open the door which He had closed.

Does Revelation 3 speak of shutting and opening both? Yes. So on October 22, 1844, something was shut, and something else was opened. What was shut? That door of mercy by which men had found access to God, for how long? 1800 years, was closed. What was that door? The door to the sanctuary, the door to the holy place. But also at that time another door was, what? Opened. And that was the door to, what? The most holy place.

Jesus says here in Revelation:

"I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it" Revelation 3:8.

And this says in *Great Controversy* that men sought to *close* the door which God had opened, and to *open* the door which He had closed. I wonder what that means. Does it make any difference? Well, friends, if it was water you needed, and the only place to get it was at an open door, it would make a difference whether you found that open door or not, wouldn't it? If it was food you needed, and you were knocking at a door that was closed and couldn't get the door open, it would be a great disappointment, wouldn't it?

So, October 22, 1844, marked an important crisis. Something closed up that had been going on for 1800 years, and something started in another place; another door was opened. I want to ask you something. Do you think this is important enough to, shall I say, make so much fuss about? What difference does it make? Jesus is up there, whether He's in the holy or the most holy. That's what I want you to study about this week. I'd like to have you study the references I have given you in *Early Writings* and *Great Controversy*.

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