

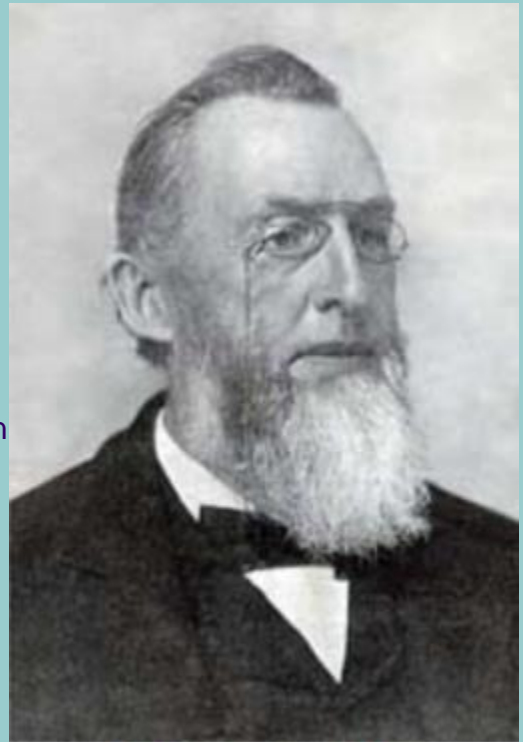
The Understanding of the Pioneers of the Seventh Day Adventist Church Regarding Philadelphia being Gods' Last True Church

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Please test everything by your bibles and be sure to go to all references in these quotes so that you have a solid foundation. Attached to the bottom of these quotes will be a link to an article documenting Ellen's beliefs regarding Philadelphia and Laodicea. God bless all who truly look over this issue. These are the historic beliefs on this issue with no commentary:

Uriah Smith, Biblical Institute, p 249-250

The proclamation of the Advent doctrine to this church results in the introduction of another state of the church called Philadelphia. This word signifies brotherly love; and this was the great characteristic of that church brought out by the preaching of the Advent doctrine. To this church Christ says, "I have set before thee an open door." The great work of the first message brought us to the cleansing of the sanctuary, when the door into the most holy was opened and there was seen the ark of God's testament. Rev.11:19. This church has the promise of being kept from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world to try them. This hour of temptation is, doubtless, that brought to view in Rev.13:14, and in 2 Thess.2:9,10, which will be produced by a still further development of spiritualism, which is already working so mightily in the land. Now, says Christ, "Behold I come quickly." This period brings us down very near to the time of the second coming of Christ.



**Uriah Smith
(1832-1903)**

Uriah Smith, Daniel and Revelation, p 395-399

The word Philadelphia signifies brotherly love, and expresses the position and spirit of those who received the Advent message up to the autumn of 1844. As they came out of the sectarian churches, they left party names and party feelings behind; and every heart beat in union, as they gave the alarm to the churches and to the world, and pointed to the coming of the Son of man as the believers's true hope. Selfishness and covetousness were laid aside, and a spirit of consecration and sacrifice was cherished. The Spirit of God was with every true believer, and his praise upon every tongue. Those who were not in that movement know nothing of the deep searching of heart, consecration of all to God, peace, joy in the Holy Spirit, and pure, fervent love for one another, which true believers then enjoyed. Those who were in that movement are aware that language would fail to describe that holy, happy state.

The Key of David. - A key is a symbol of power. The Son of God is the rightful heir to David's throne; and he is about to take to himself his great power, and to reign; hence he is represented as having the key of David. The throne of David, or of Christ, on which he is to reign, is included in the capital of his kingdom, the New Jerusalem, now above, but which is to be located on this earth, where he is to reign forever and ever. Rev.21:1-5; Luke1:32,33.

He that Openeth, and no Man Shutteth, etc. - To understand his language, it is necessary to look at Christ's position and work as connected with his ministry in the sanctuary, or true tabernacle above. Heb.8:2. A figure, or pattern, of this heavenly sanctuary once existed here upon earth in the sanctuary built by

Moses. Ex.25:8,9; Acts7:44; Heb.9:1,21,23,24. The earthly building had two apartments, - the holy place and the most holy place. Ex.26:33,34. In the first apartment were the candlestick, the table of showbread, and the altar of incense. In the second were the ark, which contained the tables of the covenant, or ten commandments, and the cherubim. Heb.9:1-5. In like manner the sanctuary in which Christ ministers in heaven has two apartments. Heb.9:24. (See also verses 8 and 12 and chapter 10:19, in each of which texts the words rendered holiest and holy place are plural in the original, and should be rendered holy places.) And as all things were made after their pattern, the heavenly sanctuary has also furniture similar to that of the worldly. For the antitype of the golden candlestick and altar of incense, in the first apartment, see Rev.4:5; 8:3; and for the antitype of the ark of the covenant, with its ten commandments, see Rev.11:19. In the worldly sanctuary the priests ministered. Ex.28:41,43; Heb.9:6,7; 13:11; etc. The ministry of these priests was a shadow of the ministry of Christ in the sanctuary in heaven. Heb.8:4,5. A complete round of service was performed in the earthly tabernacle once every year. Heb.9:7. But in the tabernacle above the service is performed once for all. Heb.7:27; 9:12. At the close of the yearly typical service, the high priest entered the second apartment, the most holy place of the sanctuary, to make an atonement; and this work is called the cleansing of the sanctuary. Lev.16:20,30,33; Eze.45:18. When the ministry in the most holy place commenced, that in the holy place ceased; and no service was performed there so long as the priest was engaged in the most holy place. Lev.16:17. A similar opening and shutting, or change of ministration, must be accomplished by Christ when the time comes for the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary. And the time did come for this service to commence at the close of the 2300 days, in 1844. To this event the opening and shutting mentioned in the text under consideration can appropriately apply, the opening being the opening of his ministration in the most holy place, and the shutting, its cessation in the first apartment, or holy place. (See exposition of the subject of the sanctuary and its cleansing, under Dan.8:14.)

Verse 9 probably applies to those who do not keep pace with the advancing light of truth, and who oppose those that do. Such shall yet be made to feel and confess that God loves those who, not rejecting the past fulfilments of his word, nor stereotyping themselves in a creed, continue to advance in the knowledge of his truth.

The Word of My Patience. - Says John, in Rev.14:12, "Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Those who now live in patient, faithful obedience to the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, will be kept in the hour of temptation and peril just before us. (See chapter 13:13-17.)

Behold, I Come Quickly. - The second coming of Christ is here again brought to view, and with more startling emphasis than in any of the preceding messages. The nearness of that event is here urged upon the attention of believers. The message applies to a period when that great event is impending; and in this we have most indubitable evidence of the prophetic nature of these messages. What is said of the

first three churches contains no allusion to the second coming of Christ, from the fact that they do not cover a period during which that event could be Scripturally expected. But we come down to the Thyatiran church, beyond which only three comparatively brief stages of the church appear before the end, and, as if then the time had come when this great hope was just beginning to dawn upon the church, the mind is carried forward to it by a single allusion: "Hold fast till I come." We come down to the next state of the church, the Sardis, the church which occupies a position still nearer that event, and the great proclamation is brought to view which was to herald it, and the duty of watching enjoined upon the church: "If thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief." We reach the Philadelphian church, still further down in the stream of time, and the nearness of the same great event then leads Him who "is holy and true" to utter the stirring declaration, "Behold, I come quickly." How evident it is from all this that these churches occupy positions successively nearer the great day of the Lord, as in each succeeding one, and in a continually increasing ratio, this great event is made more and more prominent, and is more definitely and impressively urged upon the attention of the church. Here they see indeed the day approaching. Heb.10:25.

Faithfulness Enjoined. - "Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." Not that by our faithfulness we are depriving any one else of a crown; but the verb rendered to take has a number of definitions, one of which is "to take away, snatch from, deprive of." Hold fast that thou hast, that no man deprive thee of the crown of life. Let no one, and no thing, induce you to yield up the truth, or pervert you from the right ways of the Lord; for by so doing they will cause you to lose the reward.

A Pillar in the Temple. - The overcomer in this address has the promise of being made a pillar in the temple of God, and going no more out. The temple here must denote the church; and the promise of being made as pillar therein is the strongest promise that could be given of a place of honor, permanence, and safety in the church, under the figure of a heavenly building. And when the time comes that this part of the promise is fulfilled, probation with the overcomer is past; he is fully established in the truth, and sealed. "He shall go no more out;" that is, there is no more danger of his falling away; he is the Lord's forever; his salvation is sure.

But they are to have more than this. From the moment they overcome, and are sealed for heaven, they are labeled, if we may so express it, as belonging to God and Christ, and addressed to their destination, the New Jerusalem. They are to have written upon them the name of God, whose property they are, the name of the New Jerusalem, to which place they are going, not old Jerusalem, where some are vainly looking; and they have upon them the new name of Christ, by whose authority they are to receive everlasting life, and enter into the kingdom. Thus sealed and labeled, the saints of God are safe. No enemy will be able to prevent their reaching their destination, their glorious haven of rest, Jerusalem above.

THE SIXTH CHURCH -- PHILADELPHIA

“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 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. Him that overcometh, will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out; and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God; and I will write upon him my new name. He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.” Revelation 3:7-13.

Review and Herald, vol 1, November, 1850, #1, p 8

Sixth state, Philadelphia signifies brotherly love. This is the state that all advent believers were merging into, when that united thrilling cry was rushing through the land, like many waters, "Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him." Babylon's Sectarian organizations (in the Sardis state) were shaken in every direction, and their most pious and efficient members were led and moved directly to the state of brotherly love. Not an advent believer went any where else, until the dispersion, after the cry ended. Chap.iii,7, shows the shut door, and the open door, that no man can shut.

The Master of the house, our Great High Priest, in the Sanctuary in heaven, [Heb.viii,1,2; ix,1-5,] rose up and shut the outer door of his daily ministration with the world, and no man can open it, and opened the door into the holiest of all; where the ten commandments are seen, [Rev.xi,19,] and "no man can shut it." This was done when the 2300 days ended, on the tenth day of the seventh month, 1844, and no where else. Here was the perfect harmony of shadow and substance. Aaron once a year in the shadow; Jesus, in the substance at the end of 2300 years. This proves the day and year that the door was shut; and that the last, and only safe one was then opened for the overcomers in the Philadelphia church. The Philadelphia church kept the Saviour's word and have not denied his name. Those that left this state, and became Laodiceans, took the opposite, i.e, they did not hold fast his word, and hence they denied his name. See Rev.iii,8.

Jesus, in verse 10, promises to keep all from the hour of temptation, or trial that have kept the word of his patience. That is, all that are patient waiters, in this state of the church, he will keep, when the decree goes forth from the Dragon [Rev.xiii,15] to kill them.

Then Jesus is to come quickly, and the true church is exhorted to hold fast their experience in the past, verse 11. If they do not some one will take their crown. See what befalls those that give up their experience. Verse 9. In verse 12, is the precious overcoming promise to all in this church. They are to be pillars in the temple of God, and have the name of God, the Holy City, and Jesus' own new name written upon them. Here we see that all the precious promises are made to this church that believe in the shut door, and keep in the open door. They cannot be claimed by those remaining in the Sardis, or Laodicean state of the church.

Review and Herald, vol 8, October 16, 1856, #24, p 189

Philadelphia signifies, "brotherly love," and expresses the position and spirit of those who received the advent message up to the Autumn of 1844. As they came out of the sectarian churches, they left party names and party feelings behind, and every heart beat in union as they gave the alarm to the nominal churches and to the world, and pointed to the coming of the Son of man as the consummation of the true believer's hope. Selfishness and covetousness were laid aside, and a spirit of consecration and sacrifice was cherished. The Spirit of God was in every true believing soul, and his praise on every tongue. Those who were not in that movement know nothing of the deep searching of heart, consecration of all to God, peace, joy in the Holy Ghost, and pure, fervent love for each other, which true believers then felt. Those who were in that movement are aware that language would fail to describe that state of "brotherly love."

It will be necessary, for want of room, to pass by many things of interest in the testimony to this church as we have in the testimonies to the former churches; but we call especial attention to verse 7, which establishes the chronology of the church of brotherly love. "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." That Christ is here described, no one will deny. He is the rightful heir to David's throne, hence has the key of David, which may represent power. The throne of David, or Christ, on which he is to reign, is in the capital of his kingdom, the New Jerusalem now above. The opening and shutting can refer only to the change of ministration from the Holy to the most Holy of the heavenly Sanctuary, at the end of the 2300 days, in 1844. It was then that the ministration in the Holy Place closed, and the ministration in the most Holy for the forgiveness of sins, and to cleanse the Sanctuary, was opened by him that hath the key of David. "Behold, I set before thee an open door." "And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament." Rev.xi,19. We can apply texts of this class to no other events than Christ's entering the most Holy, in 1844, and opening his ministration there, where the ark of ten commandments is, hence, since that time the Sabbath, with the whole law of God, has been present truth in a special sense.

Compare with the above texts, Dan.vii,13,14; Ps.ii,8,9; Rev.xi,15; Matt.xxv,10. That Christ receives the kingdom, takes the throne of David, before his second advent, is plainly taught. This union is represented by the marriage, [Matt.xxv,10,] and is called, "the marriage of the Lamb." Rev.xix,7. Since 1844, has been the patient, waiting,

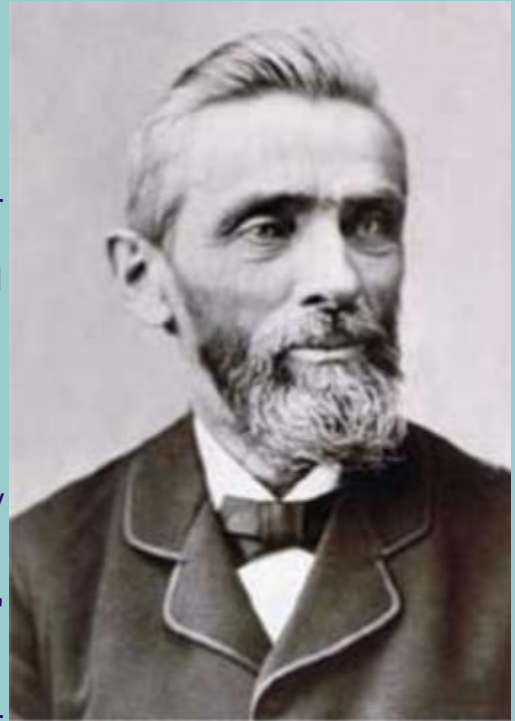
watching time. "here is the patience of the saints, here are they that keep the commandments of God." Rev.xiv,12. "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord when he will return from the wedding," &c. Luke xii,35,36.

J.N. Loughborough, The Great Second Advent Movement, p 217-219

The Philadelphia church, the sixth state of the gospel church, is next mentioned. This church represents the people who had been brought out under the proclamation of the first and second messages of Revelation 14. To this church the Lord says, "Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." (Revelation 3:11). They are still further addressed in the following words: "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." (Revelation 3:7-8).

What is to be understood by the open and shut door in the scripture just quoted? We think a satisfactory answer to the question may be found in the accompanying explanation: While there were those among the Adventists who had received advanced light, and were teaching that the Saviour had changed his service from the first to the second apartment of the heavenly sanctuary, and were correctly presenting the open and shut door question to those who would hear, another class opposed this truth, and were trying to establish faith in the doctrine that the open door was closed, and the closed door open. In doing this they were hedging up the way, or hindering the work, of the Lord's servants here on earth. The doors of the heavenly sanctuary are opened and closed by the power of Christ-"He that openeth, and no man shutteth." In the address to the Philadelphia church, the people who hold fast, keep the word, and do not deny his name, gain a victory that opens a door that no man can shut. This undoubtedly refers to the door of access to the people, which door men, seemingly (as we shall see), had effectively shut; but as a recognition of their steadfastness, the Lord sets before the faithful an "open door" that no man can shut.

Many instances are given in the Scriptures in which a door is used in this sense. Paul, in writing to the Corinthians, says, "A great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries."⁸ Again, in his second letter to the



**John N.
Loughborough
(1832-1924)**

Corinthians, he says, "When I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord, I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother."⁹ He also made request of the Colossians on this wise: "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving; withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds."¹⁰

From these scriptures it appears that openings for the proclamation of the truth are called open doors; and from the words spoken to the Philadelphia church it would seem that at the time this people were called out, men were making strenuous efforts to close the door of utterance against them. As the Philadelphia church passed through the trial, holding fast to his "word" and "name," the word of the Lord to them was, that he would place before them an open door that no man could shut.

8 1 Cor. 16:9.

9 2 Cor. 2:12, 13.

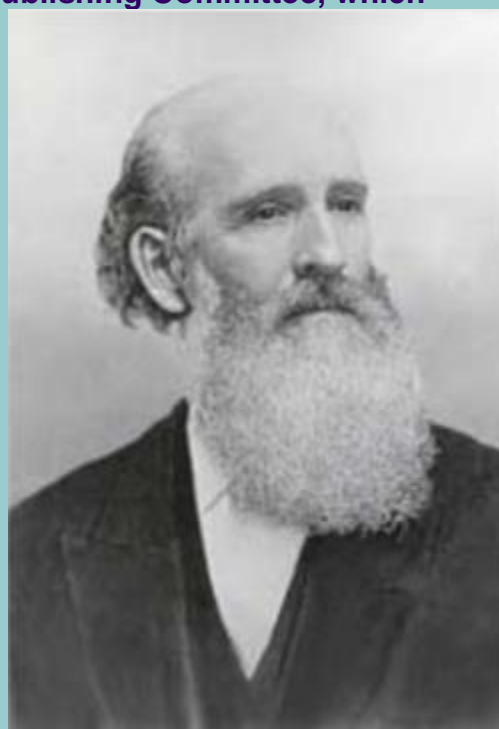
10 Col. 4:2, 3.

In a September 1850 article by the Advent Review Publishing Committee, which was composed of Hiram Edson, David Arnold, George W. Holt, Samuel W. Rhodes, and James White who apparently wanted to leave a permanent record of what their stand was on God's last true church, the article states: "Now just as sure as the Philadelphia church is the true church of the last days, just so sure the 144,000 are sealed, just before the coming of the Lord"

"Behold I set before thee an open door. This door Christ opens, while He shuts another. As the Philadelphia church applies to no other period than the time of the termination of the 2300 days, when Christ closed His work for the world in the Holy, and opened the door of the Holiest of all, the conclusion seems irresistible that the open and shut door of Revelation 3:7, 8, refers to the change in the position and work of our great High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary. He then closed the work or door of the daily ministrations in the Holy, and opened the door of the Most Holy. The tabernacle of the testimony was then opened; but before this could be done, the door, or work of Christ's continual mediation in the Holy, had to be closed. This may well be likened to the shut door in the parable.

The idea that the door of God's mercy is closed or ever was to be closed to those who do not reject the offers of mercy is not found in the Bible. No such door is mentioned in Scripture. But that there ever has been a point, beyond which men may go, where, according to the plan of salvation, the intercession of Christ could not benefit them is evident." [James White NRH, June 9, 1851].

In addition, E.G. White counseled Haskell to write on Daniel and the Revelation for she knew he had truth, and he quotes in his book *Story of the Seer of Patmos*, pp. 86, 87: "The message to the Philadelphian period reaches to the end of time. And all who receive the crown will have passed through its experiences... The messages to Sardis and Philadelphia separately cover a period extending to the second coming of Christ; but in addition to the experiences portrayed in the fifth and sixth messages, that which is directed to Laodicea is also applicable... The cry. Babylon is fallen, 'was proclaimed when the churches rejected the advent message; and as in the Thyatira period the true separated from those who turned from the light; so in the days when the principles of Protestantism are again discarded, this time by the daughters of Babylon, a separation is necessary." Stephen Haskell, **Story of the Seer of Patmos**, pp. 86, 87



**James Springer
White
(1821-1881)**