

**ART THOU HE THAT SHOULD COME
OR DO WE LOOK FOR ANOTHER**

George Tabac Aug. 1989

We read in MAT 11:2,3:

“Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples,
And said unto him, **Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?**”

We are amazed as to why John would have this doubt.

John was instructed by God how he was to herald the announcement about Jesus as the long awaited Messiah -- he baptized Jesus, -- he saw the dove descend from heaven on Jesus, -- he heard God's words, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."

We wonder, -- How could he doubt?

We recall another occasion when two disciples were on the road to Ammaus after Jesus crucifixion. One was Cleopas, and other is thought to have been Peter. As they walked and talked they were very sad and despondent. Jesus approached them and inquired as to why they were so sad.

Not recognizing Jesus for he had a different bodily appearance, they went on to explain the events that transpired the last week about how their beloved Lord was falsely accused, condemned to death and was crucified.

"But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel:" (Luke 24:13-21)

How could they possibly doubt? How could John doubt?

Probably the greatest reason, -- was Israel for centuries had longed for their Messiah to come. Now when he had finally come their hearts rejoiced, for his Kingdom would be set up and the blessings would flow to all people.

But now, their Lord was dead. Their hope began to wane. They began to wonder? Were they mistaken in thinking Jesus was the Messiah?

For us now looking back, it seems almost unthinkable that with all the evidences that they could wonder and doubt.

But may we not judge them too harshly.

For it is possible for us to, to at times begin to wonder if we are right.

We believe our Lord returned in 1874 to begin setting up his Kingdom.

But 115 years have passed since 1874. We're 75 years past 1914 when Bro. Russell first expected the kingdom. But man still suffers and dies, the kingdom blessings we all longed for are still not here.

So on occasion, like the disciples on the road to Emmaus, our minds may begin to wonder to ourselves, -- could it possibly be that our understanding is not quite correct?

Could it be our understanding of chronology is wrong?

Could it be possibly be that our understanding of the time element of the *2nd presence* is not quite right?

Was Bro. Russell really "*That servant?*"

As with John of old the question may flash through our minds concerning **Bro. Russell**, - "*Art thou he that should come, - OR do we look for another?*"

The thought may be suggested to our minds that perhaps "*that servant*" refers to not one individual, - but to several special servants that God would appoint during each period of the church.

Therefore we should expect to find more light from others as we progress further into the 7th stage of the church.

Or, could it be that maybe Bro. Russell was only the 6th servant and was only given partial light similar to Luther, and we should be looking for more complete understanding from a 7th servant.

Brethren it is our desire to consider these questions that may have come to some of our minds. And that in so doing it is our prayer that it may strengthen our faith, and that we be not disheartened in our HOPE, - THAT SEEMS TO BE DEFERRED.

For TRULY WE BELIEVE, -- WE:

Have the truth!

That our Lord is present!

That Bro. Russell was indeed "THAT SERVANT."

When John asked the question, "Art thou He that should come,- or do we look for another," we notice that Jesus did not give a direct answer.

But rather he said , "Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see, -- The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them."

Gently reminding John to take another look as it were of the outward evidences. Could these things possibly be taking place if He were not the Messiah?

In a similar way today as we consider the question, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another," we want to take another look at the evidence.

Let's begin by recalling Jesus answer to the sad disciples on the road to Emmaus, after they expressed doubt as to whether Jesus was the Redeemer.

In Luke 24:25-27 N.I.V. we read: "How foolish you are, and how slow of heart that you do not believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory? And beginning with *Moses and all the prophets*, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself."

Could you just imagine the effect this would have had on them, as Jesus went thru prophet after prophet calling to their attention that this is exactly what was to have happened.

Oh what a balm for their hearts torn by grief and confusion. Their doubt vanished, as they said, "Did not our hearts **burn** within us while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?"

Yes Jesus gave them the key to unlock the scriptures. It was a truth that thrilled their heart. A truth Peter went on to share with us all on the day of Pentecost.

Remember what Peter taught that day? We read of it in the 3rd chapter of Acts: "Those things which God before had showed by the mouth of *all his prophets*, that Christ should **suffer.**"

And then he went on to point to the future, "When times of refreshing would come from the presence of the Lord. When God would send Jesus Christ, whom the heavens would retain until the **TIMES OF RESTITUTION OF ALL THINGS**, which God hath spoken by the mouth of *all his holy prophets* since the world began."

This is the key Jesus revealed to them that day on the road to Emmaus. The two doctrines **RANSOM AND RESTITUTION**, which were taught by *every single prophet since the world began.*

Let's imagine for a moment ourselves walking with Jesus that day on the road to Emmaus, as he refreshed their mind of the common theme that was spoken by every one of the 24 prophets.

For the sake of brevity we'll paraphrase just one or two prophecies from each.

Jude quotes ENOCH, the seventh from Adam, as prophesying: "Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints; to execute judgment upon all." (Jude 14,15)

Here we have a prophet, living way back there, the seventh from Adam, telling of the second coming of Christ, the exaltation of the Church with him, and the judging of all men in righteousness. This implies Ransom and Restitution.

Next JACOB prophesied (Gen. 49:10): "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and to Him shall the gathering of the people be."

Here we have the coming of Christ, with the scepter or right of rulership, to gather and bless the people. This also implies Ransom and Restitution.

MOSES, recorded God's declaration to the serpent, that the seed of the woman would bruise its head. (Gen. 3:15)

He wrote of the promise to Abraham, that in his seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.(Gen. 22:18) And this promise was renewed to Isaac and Jacob.

Then, we see from the Tabernacle sacrifices how atonement would be provided for the release and blessing of mankind.

By the sounding of the Jubilee trumpet and the return of every man to his possessions, we see the world's restoration to the image and likeness of God. (Lev. 25:10)

And, as a Prophet, MOSES declared that God would raise up a great prophet and Deliverer, like unto himself, to whom shall all the people give heed in the Millennial Age; (Deut. 18:15,19)

Could Ransom and restitution be more clearly taught?

Next we have the prophet SAMUEL. He recorded in 1 Sam. 2:6: "The Lord killeth, and maketh alive. He bringeth down to hell, and bringeth up." Again, Ransom and Restitution.

The prophet Job wrote; "If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to show unto man his uprightness; then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit; I HAVE FOUND A RANSOM. His flesh shall be fresher than a child's. He shall return to the days of his youth." (Job 33:23-25) Again, Ransom and Restitution.

The prophet and sweet psalmist DAVID, foresaw and wrote that after this dark night of weeping will come a morning of joy; (Psa. 30:5)

that the meek shall inherit the earth; (Psa. 37:11)

that mercy and truth will meet; that righteousness and peace will kiss each other; and truth will spring out of the earth when righteousness looks down from heaven; (Psa. 85:10,11)

that the heavens, earth, seas, fields, and trees of the wood, shall rejoice; because the Lord is coming to judge the earth with righteousness and the people with his truth; (Psa. 96:11-13)

and that the foundations of the earth have been laid so that it shall not be removed, but be forever the home of man. (Psa. 104:5)

And what is the theme of all this? The common thread? Ransom and Restitution.

SOLOMON declared in his Proverbs that the upright shall dwell in the land, and the perfect shall remain in it; (Prov. 2:21)

and that the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth. (Prov. 11;31) And he says, in Eccl. 1:4, that the earth abideth forever.

In Isaiah there are over forty references to Ransom and Restitution. Time permits the mention of only a few of them.

He prophesied that, in the last days, the Lord's Kingdom will be established on the ruins of all earthly kingdoms, and all the nations will flow into it, to learn of his ways;

at which time they will beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks, and learn war no more; (Isa. 2:2-4)

that the Lord will make to all people a feast of fat things; doctrines of joy, well refined; will swallow up death in victory, and wipe away tears from off all faces; and all the people will say, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us; (Isa. 25:6-12)

that when the Lord's judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness, and the dead will live again; (Isa. 26:9,13,19)

that the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick; because the people shall be forgiven their iniquity. (Isa. 33:24)

Additionally, ISAIAH declared that the wilderness and solitary places shall blossom as the rose;

the blind have their eyes opened;

the deaf have their ears unstopped;

the lame made to leap as an hart;

the tongue of the dumb to sing; (Isa 35)

that all the prisoners in the great prison-house of death shall be brought forth; (Isa. 42:7)

that the Lord will make this earth, which is his footstool, glorious. (Isa. 60:13)

How unmistakable the common, predominating theme of all these prophecies - Ransom and Restitution!

Then we have the prophet JEREMIAH. He foretold that the Lord will give the people a heart to know him; and they shall return to Him with their whole heart; (Jer. 24:7)

that the children shall come again from the land of the enemy; and shall no longer suffer for the sins of the parents;

and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, "Know the Lord," for they shall all know HIM, from the least even unto the greatest; (Jer. 31:16,29,34)

And what did EZEKIEL prophecy? He foretold a coming time when the Lord will take away the stony hearts out of the people, and give them hearts that are warm and tender; (Ezek. 11:19)

that the Sodomites, the Samaritans, and the Jews, shall return to their former estate; and the Lord will establish his covenant with them; (Ezek. 16:55)

that it will no longer be necessary to die; (Ezek. 18:31,32)

that the Lord will put His spirit into the people, and cause them to walk in His ways; and the land, that was desolate, shall become like the garden of Eden. (Ezek. 37:24; 36:35)
Again all teaching of Ransom and Restitution?

DANIEL foretold that the God of Heaven shall set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, but shall break in pieces and consume all other kingdoms, and which shall stand forever; (Dan. 2:44)

HOSEA prophesied that the Lord will break the bow and sword, stop battles, and make all to lie down safely, and shall hear the cries of men (Hos. 2:18,21)

that He will ransom them from hell, and redeem them from death; and destroy hell altogether. (Hos. 13:14)

The prophet JOEL prophesied that the Lord will cause the pastures to spring, the trees to bear fruit abundantly, and that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be delivered. (Joel 2:22-32)

AMOS was the next one of the holy prophets; and he said that the Lord would return, and build again the tabernacle of David, and set it up; which means to re-establish the Kingdom of God on earth; that the residue of men - or all the rest of mankind - might seek after the Lord. (Amos 9:11,12) Again, the common theme of Ransom and Restitution.

OBADIAH was the next; and in the last verse of his short prophecy he says: "And SAVIOURS shall come up on mount Zion, to judge the mount of Esau." In other words, Jesus Christ and his body members, the Church, shall constitute the heavenly phase of the Kingdom, and shall judge the world in righteousness.

The prophet JONAH, by his experiences with the great fish, prophesied of Jesus who was sacrificed and was three days in the grave.

And the sparing of Nineveh pictures God's mercy upon the poor world, in the Times of Restitution.

Then we have the prophet MICAH. He has written of the coming of the Kingdom of God on the earth, accompanied by the rebuking of strong nations afar off;

that they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; that nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore;

that they shall sit every man under his vine and his fig tree, and none shall make them afraid; (Micah 4:1-5,8) Could Restitution be more clearly taught than this?

NAHUM prophesied that the Lord will revenge himself upon Satan, undoing his work; (Nahum 1:2,)

that upon the mountains will be seen the feet of Him that bringeth good tidings and publisheth peace. (Nahum 1:15)

The next was HABAKKUK; and this was the prophet who foresaw that, at the time of the end, a faithful and wise servant would attune his ear to the word of God, especially the dispensational truths, saying (Moffatt):

"On my watch-tower I will stand, at my post upon the turret, watching to see what he will say to me, what answer he will offer to my plea;"

and that the Lord would bless that servant's efforts, and lead him to make a chart of the **Divine Plan of the Ages**, saying:

"Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it." (Hab. 2:1,2)

And Habakkuk also wrote of the time when: "The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." (Hab. 2:14)

ZEPHANIAH foresaw the time when the entire social order of the earth would be devoured by the fire of God's jealousy;

and that then he would turn to the people a pure language or doctrine; with the result that they would call upon the name of the Lord, to serve Him with one consent. (Zeph. 3:8,9)

HAGGAI was the next one of the holy prophets, and he said that "The desire of all nations shall come." (Hag. 2:7)

ZECHARIAH prophesied that many nations shall be joined to the Lord in THAT DAY, and be his people; and he will dwell in the midst of them;" (Zech. 2:11)

that the ground shall give its increase; and the Lord will remove the fears of the people; (Zech. 8:3,8,12)

that the Lord shall be King over all the earth, and men shall dwell in it; and there shall be no more utter destruction, but all shall be holiness unto the Lord. (Zech. 14:9,11,20)

MALACHI foretold that from the rising of the sun even unto the going down thereof, the Lord's name shall be great among all the people;

and in every place, heart adoration shall be offered to His name; (Mal. 1:11)

that a Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in its beams. (Mal. 4:2)

JOHN THE BAPTIST was the next; and he was the last of the holy prophets, because Jesus said:

"The law and the prophets were unto John."

John quoted from Isaiah, "Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God." (Luke 3:5,6)

While these prophets spoke of many other things, there is one central, predominating theme common to them all; and that is **RANSOM AND RESTITUTION**.

And where is this doctrine today? With a doctrine as prominent as this, found on almost every page of the Bible, you would think that it would be clearly taught and understood by all who name the name of Christ, in every corner of the world, as the waters cover the sea.

But what do we find? Search as we might among the hundreds of nominal Christian denominations throughout the world, we find NOT ONE that teaches the pure doctrine of Ransom and Restitution! This seems incredible.

How have we come to *see*, to *understand*, to *appreciate*, these precious truths??

We reflect again upon the question regarding who is "**the wise and faithful servant**" of Matt. 24.

"ART THOU HE THAT SHOULD COME, - OR DO WE LOOK FOR ANOTHER?"

Before considering further details to help substantiate "THAT WISE AND FAITHFUL SERVANT," lets consider Matt. 24:45-47 to note the tie in of the appointment of that servant in relationship to the *Lord's 2nd presence*.

"Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? *Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.*

We notice that the servant was to be already engaged in giving meat in due season at the time the Lord would return at His 2nd presence.

Thus in order to establish **WHO** that servant is we must first establish **WHEN our Lord returned**, and then see if there was a servant already dispensing "meat in due season."

From the Harvest Message we have several scriptural chronological lines of reasoning presented, to show how our Lord returned invisibly in 1874.

Because of time we can't go into detail, but merely to recall them to our attention.

1. He would return after 6000 years of sin and death to begin the antitypical 1000 year Sabbath day of His 2nd presence. Which we have seen began in 1874.

2. From Daniel chapter 12 we have come to understand the 1260, - 1290, - and 1335 day prophecy, which again culminated in 1874.

3. We have seen how the Jewish and Gospel age parallels, again pointed to 1874 as the time our Lord's would return.

4. We have seen how the antitypical Jubilee cycles again indicated 1874 as the time our Lord would return to begin the process of setting up the kingdom.

We have come to see these harmonious teaching in the Harvest Message to be very reasonable.

However we realize as we mentioned earlier since so much time (115 years have elapsed) that some may begin to wonder perhaps something isn't quite right with our chronology.

Can we feel secure in basing our understanding of such an important doctrine as the Lord's 2nd presence just on chronological proofs alone?

I think we can! But you know we don't have to.

The Lord has given us more than just chronological proofs alone. He has in addition given us many other signs or evidences by which we would be able to know that indeed the Lord has returned.

Many are given in the 24th chapter of Matthew, and the 12th chapter of Daniel.

Let's consider the one that I believe is irrefutable. Lets for the moment forget that we had any other scriptural evidence whatsoever to indicate when the Lord would be present, - except this one.

It was one of those given by our Lord in response to the question, in Matt.24:3, "what will be the sign of thy presence and the end of the age."

It's familiar to us all but since we use it mostly in our message to the public it may have lost some of the impact of what a tremendous faith strengthening scripture it is to show us that we have the **truth** and that our Lord has indeed **returned**.

Matt. 24:32-34 "Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled."

From the many typical references in the scriptures to the FIG tree, we all realize that unequivocally it represents the nation of Israel.

Let's recall just one. How Jesus cursed the fig tree which pictured Israel, saying, that it should no longer bear any fruit, till the end of the age.

This was in harmony with Jeremiah's prophecy, of how Israel would be cast out of their home land, - scattered among the other nations, and would there suffer persecution for a period of time that would be equal in length to their period of favor.

After which favor would return, and the Lord would send for fishers and hunters to regather Israel back to their homeland.

So this sign of Jesus in Matthew 24, is referring to this return of favor. "When you see the fig tree spring to life, (that is Israel becoming a nation again,) you know my second presence has already begun."

"That I have already begun the process of setting up the kingdom. In fact the full establishment of the kingdom will take place in the generation who sees the rebirth of Israel."

Brethren, even if we had no other scriptural evidence or signs, this one would be beyond question. Faith isn't even required, it's nearly walking by sight. How else could we possibly interpret this scripture.

Indeed the Lord IS PRESENT, and the glory of the kingdom will soon be here!

But the Lord didn't stop there. He gave us other signs to prove His 2nd presence as well.

Matt.24:21-22 "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved."

Could any of us doubt this sign of trouble has and is being fulfilled?

Never before in all history has there been a world war, let alone two of them, -- 1914 and 1941.

Never before in all history was it possible to destroy all flesh. Today hydrogen bombs could destroy all life on earth 13 times over in a matter of minutes.

Daniel 12:1,4 adds two other signs: "And at that time shall Michael stand up, . . . and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: . . . But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.

Has knowledge been increased? Every major invention and advancement in technology

has occurred since our Lord's 2nd presence in 1874.

Are many running to and fro? For nearly 6000 years mans means of transportation was by foot or horse and buggy. What have we today.

Has our Lord returned? Do we need More corroboration?

He has given us more. The final sign by which we would be able to know he has returned we want to emphasize again.

Matt. 24:45-47 Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? **Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.** Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods.

We have just reviewed the signs by which we know the Lord has returned. Now this final sign is saying that at the very time of our Lord's 2nd presence there would be a faithful and wise servant who would be already dispensing meat in due season, that is dispensational truths.

Was this true of Bro. Russell? Yes, in his autobiography of how he gradually came to understand the truth, he says in Reprint 3821 to 3826, That it was in the year 1872 that he came to understand the doctrine of the "Ransom," and how it would afford all mankind the opportunity to gain life in the kingdom, in the "Times of Restitution."

Yes these two doctrines of Ransom and Restitution that are in reality the key that unlocks the scriptures were understood, in **1872** and were being proclaimed at the time of our Lord's 2nd presence in 1874, to those in a bible study group that Bro. Russell had formed.

Could "that servant" of Matt.24 be referring to some one else other than Bro. Russell?

Was there any other religious writer who was living and dispensing these truths of meat in due season at the time of our Lord's 2nd presence in 1874 that would fit Matthews description?

Has there been any other source of information since then that has opened our minds eye to see these keys of Ransom and Restitution which unlock the harmonious beauty of God's Plan.

The answer was NO then, and as we have seen it still remains no till this day.

During his ministry, Brother Russell traveled more than a million miles; and this was before the advent of air travel. He delivered 30,000 sermons, many of them three hours long. Also he wrote over 50,000 pages of Bible teachings, which were circulated by

tracts, newspapers, and books, by the millions of copies and in many languages throughout the world.

"Art thou he that should come, -- or do we look for another?"

But we might still be inclined to wonder, could it be that Bro. Russell was only **one** of **several** messengers to the 7th stage of the church?

That "That Servant," is not one individual, but refers to several special servants the Lord would use during the entire stage of the church as it progresses?

Or perhaps as the society has interpreted it to mean it refers to a "Channel of Information." Their society which they feel is the Lord's only source of true teaching at the present time, and that it would get further light as the age progresses.

Or as others have suggested perhaps it refers to all the Lord's people as servants, or all the "elders" who are servants to the brethren?

And thus in either of these cases we should expect additional servants as we progress further into the 7th stage of the church?

First, let's consider the scripture which refers to the 7 special messengers to the church. In Rev. 1:16 we were told our Lord held in his right hand 7 stars. Then in Rev. 1:20 we were told, "The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches."

Here we have reference to the 7 stages of the church and 7 special stars or messengers the Lord would use to bring meat in due season to each stage of the church. Are these stars seven individuals or are they referring to multiple messengers to each stage of the church?

In Rev. 12:1 we read, And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars:

Here we have a picture of the early church, clothed with the sun, or purity of the Gospel light, supported by the moon or corroborative types of the law, and upon her head a crown of 12 stars, picturing the teachings of the 12 apostles.

So here we have a positive precedence for considering stars or messengers as **INDIVIDUALS**. 12 stars picturing the 12 apostles, and so in like manner we believe the 7 stars or messengers to the 7 stages of the church were **7 INDIVIDUALS**.

Now lets look carefully into the grammatical structure of the Greek in the scriptures which refer to "THAT SERVANT.

In the context of Luke 12:36-40 where our Lord refers to the church overall as Truth servants, He refers to them in the plural -- "**servants.**"

Luke 12:37 "Blessed are those **servants**, (plural) whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.

Then notice by way of contrast "how" the Lord would serve these servants in the **plural**, which are the watchful saints at the time of the 2nd presence.

Verses 42-44, "And the Lord said, Who then is **that** faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season?

Blessed is **that** servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make **him** ruler over all that he hath.

We notice the contrast how in our previous verse 37 it referred to servants plural who would be watching for the Lord's return, but now in verse 32 it shows how he would provide "**one,**" -- that is, a a **singular** servant to serve them.

"Who then is "that," faithful and wise servant. In the Greek the word for "that" is the definite article "THE," both in these verses and in the Matthew account.

"Blessed is "THE" servant, (singular,) whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing."

The contrast between "those servants," plural, with "THE SERVANT" singular is unmistakable. By all rules of grammar it is contrasting one individual as compared to a group.

Also in both the Matthew and Luke account "That" servant is clearly distinguished from the Lord's people or servants as a whole, because he is spoken of as being made "ruler over the household." Therefore "that" servant cannot himself be the household, the Church.

But rather he was placed in charge of the household overall, and all of his master's goods, and as such, has all the other servants in his charge.

We might also add that in our Lord's day, individuals, not classes were made stewards.

Finally we want to note again that in both the Matthew and Luke accounts the time

element of WHEN THAT SERVANT IS APPOINTED.

It is AT THE VERY MOMENT THE LORD RETURNS he is already on the scene. "Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord WHEN HE COMETH shall find so doing."

If "that servant," was to refer to additional servants after Bro. Russell, why would our Lord have tied down the time element of that servant to just His initial return, "when he cometh he would find so doing."

It would seem that if there were to be additional servants, it would mention that there would be servants **plural, beginning** with his return.

The fact that it then ends the scenario by saying, "of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath," shows a finality, -- an ending scene, -- this would be the last of the 7 special messengers to the church.

"Art thou He that should come, or do we look for another?"

Next we would like to consider the question, could it be that perhaps Bro. Russell was the 6th messenger of the church and not the 7th, and as such was only given partial light, -- somewhat similar as how the Lord gave Wycliffe and Luther, only partial light.

And that we should be looking for the 7th who would be given the final complete understanding of meat in due season.

Let's go on to see how this is **NOT** a possibility.

Thus far we've established how the Lord's 2nd presence has begun, and that at his return he would appoint a special servant.

Now we would like to go on to examine the scriptures that show that these two events, take place in the 7th stage of the church not the 6th.

Rev.11:15,17 And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdom of this world has become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever...

Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged.

In these verses we can see it is describing the period of our Lord's **reign** which began with His 2nd presence.

But notice the time element in the opening verse to this scene, -- "And the **seventh** angel sounded:

The one who makes this great proclamation is the **7th messenger** NOT the 6th. **The 7th angel sounded**, -- the time element is the 7th stage of the church, -- the time of the proclamation, of the **7th messenger** to the church.

Another scripture which indicates Bro. Russell was the 7th messenger and not the 6th is Rev. 10:7

"In the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished.

This scripture has been used by some to reason against the thought that Bro. Russell is that servant. The reasoning being that according to the Greek this scripture should read, ""In the days of the voice of the seventh angel, *whenever he is about to sound*, the mystery of God will be finished.

Marshall's Diaglot confirms that, "whenever he is about to sound," is the correct Greek rendering. So at first reading it does seem to say that the mystery of God will be finished before the 7th angel even begins to sound.

However in Marshall's Diaglot he has a footnote in Rev. 3:16 for the word *about* which is the Greek word "**MELLO**." There he states that this verb "Mello," does not necessarily connote imminence, but only simple futurity. This can be confirmed by looking up the many other passages where this word "mello" is used, in reference to things in the indefinite future.

Bearing this in mind let's consider further the setting of Rev. 10:7. At the time John wrote the book of Revelation he did not know when the 7th angel would sound. Whether it would be 500, a 1000, or 2000 years in the future.

Therefore the overall thought conveyed in this scripture is that "the mystery of God would be finished in the days of the voice of the 7th messenger," *whenever it would be in the future*, that the message of the 7th angel was being proclaimed.

Notice it's not in the days of the 7th messenger, (that is when he would be still living,) -- but in the days of the **VOICE** of the 7th messenger, that is when his message is still going forth, that the mystery of God would be finished.

We believe what is referred to by "the mystery of God being finished," is, that it includes not only the understanding of the overall plan of God, but it would include the completion of the church.

That "great mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but is now made manifest to his saints,... which is Christ in You the hope of glory." Col.1:26,27

Thus we have another scripture confirming that the understanding of the mystery of God, (that is the understanding of the churches part in the sin offering,) would be understood and completed not in the 6th but in the 7th or last stage of the church.

Another scripture which shows the Lord's 2nd presence comes in the 7th stage of the church not the 6th, is Rev. 3:11.

It is the Lord's message to the Philadelphia or 6th stage of the church when indicates he is not yet present.

Note Rev.3:11 Behold I come quickly, (that is He's not yet present,) hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.

But then notice his arrival at the 7th stage of the church in Rev. 3:20. "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock.

Thus since once again we see that our Lord returns in the 7th stage of the church, and the mystery of God is finished in the days of the voice of the 7th angel, we have further corroboration that Bro. Russell is indeed the 7th messenger, the last special messenger, not the 6th, and therefore we should not be expecting another.

We trust we have shown sufficient information to establish that Bro. Russell was "that servant."

Now we would like to consider what is implied by the statement "He was made ruler over all His goods."

Does it mean he was inspired like the apostles therefore infallible, and never made a mistake?

No NOT at all! On the contrary we read in Volume 4 page 613, "To our understanding this would NOT imply that "that servant" or steward, used as a channel for the circulation of the meat in due season," would be the ORIGINATOR of that meat, nor INSPIRED, nor INFALLIBLE.

Does "master over all his goods mean that he would comment on every scripture in the bible to give us the correct understanding?

No we realize there are literally hundreds of scriptures that Bro. Russell never

commented on at all.

Does it mean that the scriptures he did comment on in the volumes and reprints and other writings should be accepted as absolute truth, and quoted in our studies as proof of a scriptures meaning?

No again Bro. Russell repeatedly admonished us thruout his writings, to prove all things by scripture.

Then what is meant by he was made "ruler over all his goods?"

Our returned Lord thru that wise and faithful servant gave us the keys to unlock the scriptures. The knowledge of Ransom and Restitution opened up the understanding of God's grand and glorious plan, that will result in the blessing of all the families of the earth.

He gave us the chart of the ages in fulfillment of Habakkuk 2:2 "Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. This enabled us to see dispensational truths as never before. It brought a harmony to the entire Bible.

In other words, he was made "**ruler over all his goods,**" from the standpoint that he was the one whom the Lord chose to give us the keys, the truths, necessary to accomplish the Harvest Work.

We could see for one to be in this highly exalted position that there would almost be a tendency to worship him.

Rev. 22:6-9 refers to this, "The Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel (the 7th messenger) to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done... And I John (John here represents the church in the flesh who are given the Harvest truths.) And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God."

Yes we are to worship God, not the instrument he used to unlock the scriptures. But we believe we are to recognize his position and above all, his teachings in the Volumes, Reprints, Tabernacle and his other writings as truly "Meat in due season," given by our returned Lord.

This does not mean that we can never learn anything from other writers, or we should never use other reference books. No I'm sure that most all of us use Strong's concordance with it's Greek and Hebrew word definitions, as well as other lexicons, biblical encyclopedias, histories, and even on occasion other biblical commentaries.

Not from the standpoint of finding another new plan of the ages, no but to understand more clearly the meaning of a Greek or Hebrew word, or some piece of historical data, or understanding an idiomatic expression.

So on occasion as we do use other reference books may we be exceedingly careful, to accept as truth only those things which harmonize with all other scriptural teachings of God's plan.

May we bear in mind, that the writer will most often have his roots steeped in the doctrine of eternal torment, the immortality of the soul, once in grace always in grace, that Christ living in us will accomplished all there is to do, and there's nothing that we must do to prove ourselves faithful unto death.

This doesn't mean we will never find some new kernel of truth. We realize that since Bro. Russell's day earlier bible manuscripts have been found that may help clarify certain passages. Also we realize that prophetic passages are being clarified as we see events unfolding. The 2nd world war. The hydrogen bomb. The holocaust. Israel's rebirth of a nation. The common Market.

So as we study, as we research, may we keep things in their proper perspective. May it **not be** from the standpoint of expecting to find some great revelation that is contrary to God's Plan that we have learned in the Harvest Message, thru that wise and faithful servant.

"Art thou he that should come or do we look for another."

Jesus reply to John the Baptist was, -- "Look again at the evidences.

Think for a moment how much knowledge of God's Plan we would have, if we had ***all the books of other Christian commentators***, but we had none of Bro. Russell's?

"Art thou he that should come or do we look for another."

May God help us to know and appreciate the answer.