

## OUR LORD'S SECOND PRESENCE

As Proved by the Prophetic Parable of "That Wise and Faithful Servant"

Br. Ted Smith

PREFACE: I believe we have, in the past, possibly not fully grasped the REASON for the giving of the parable of "That Wise and Faithful Servant". Many of us have thought it was given only to point out a special Servant in the end of the age. I am impressed with the thought that it was a picture given by our Lord concerning something which would be in evidence as a means of proving the second presence of Christ in a very special way. If this be so, should it not be of most absorbing interest to the espoused? A number are in a doubtful attitude at this time concerning the fact of the second presence, therefore a study of this prophetic parable from this standpoint should produce some good results. The big question is, HOW does the parable prove or indicate the second presence? Consider the following points:

- I. Why would our Lord state, in the form of a prophetic parable, that at his second coming he would find a "wise and faithful servant" giving "meat in due season," and that this servant would be an individual made "ruler over the Lord's household", and that he would have associated with him "fellow servants," and that he would (in some manner) be made "ruler over all the Lord's goods"? Why, unless it be for the purpose of bringing to our attention prominent facts which would be so strikingly different from conditions before the second advent, as to enable us to recognize the second presence when it actually does occur? (Matt. 24:3, 45-47; Luke 12:42-44)
- II. Some seem to think that this parable is an answer to the question, "what shall be the sign of Pastor Russell's presence?" Actually it is not -- it is an answer to the question, "What shall be the sign of thy (Christ's) presence?" (Matt. 24:3) The facts concerning Pastor Russell and his ministry correspond so accurately in every detail with the prophetic parable of "That Servant" that apparently the parable is fulfilled and thus we have, as intended, a strong and convincing proof of the second presence.
- III. Before the time of Pastor Russell's ministry, several pastors were used of God in different parts of the world, simultaneously and independently of one another. Proof: "William Miller," "Mr. Wolf," and "others in Europe and Asia." (Volume II, page 240, par. 2. Volume III, page 84, par. 2.) In other words a class was used -- all were stewards but none was "chief steward."
- IV. But during Pastor Russell's ministry God used a different method of ministering to his people; viz., instead of using a class of pastors to serve his people, God used ONE Pastor in a WORLD-WIDE ministry, which made him a "chief steward." Others used of God at this time were "fellow-servants"; i. e. instead of being used independently of one

another, as in the past, they all cooperated in the ONE WORLD-WIDE ministry of this chief pastor or "CHIEF Steward." This all corresponds to perfection with details of the parable -- the "chief steward over the Lord's household" and the "fellow-servants." (Matt. 24:45, 49; Luke 12:42, 45. Also see Volume IV, page 613, par. 1 and 2.)

V. Before the time of Pastor Russell's ministry the Divine Plan in all its varied details was not fully harmonized nor ministered in a logical and comprehensive order -- at least, not in the important sense in which it was harmonized and ministered later. (See Volume III, pages 115 to 120.)

VI. Our Pastor seemed to GRASP AN UNDERSTANDING of the Divine Plan in its entirety and he ministered the same to the church through his writings. And he not only ministered unto us the Divine Plan, but he was also the medium through which prophecy was ministered to the "household." Anything original with a "fellow-servant" was "communicated" (Gal. 6:6) to the Pastor, and thus he was recognized as the center from which proceeded everything intended by God for the church during his lifetime. (Matt. 24:47; Luke 12:44) This constituted another sign of the second presence, because in the past, several were used over the Lord's goods, none being "chief," or the center from which proceeded everything for the church everywhere.

VII. If we say "That Servant" is a class, we ignore the setting of the parable; and as the parable is apparently an answer to the question, "What shall be the sign of thy presence?" this interpretation would not prove the fact (would not be a "sign") as classes were used heretofore as already pointed out.

VIII. If we say Our Pastor was made "ruler over all the Lord's goods" in the sense that he was supposed to give us full light on every subject (prophetic), this is not according to fact (and is not necessary to prove the second presence as shown in the foregoing), because (for instance) just before he died, he said he did not understand the Book of Revelation as a whole. (Question Book, page 646, question 3.) With his comprehensive grasp of the Divine Plan and prophecy, it is reasonable to think that the Pastor was used of the Lord to give us all the essential knowledge of Revelation; and that which he did not explain fully is left for us to study and enjoy as best we can keeping all our studies in good harmony with the Divine Plan and understood prophecy.

IX. Some suggest that "That Servant" is a class and that being made "ruler over all the Lord's goods" is a promised reward beyond the veil. In view of the setting of the parable, and the interpretation foregoing, which is so well substantiated by facts and reason, giving us consistent and reasonable corroborative proof of the Lord's second presence, we cannot think this suggestion is a correct one.