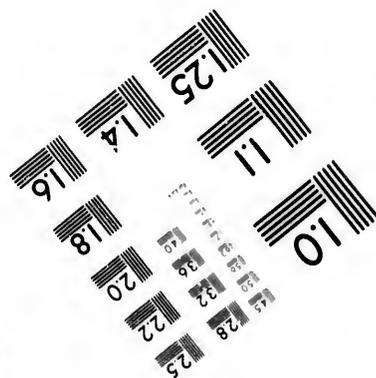
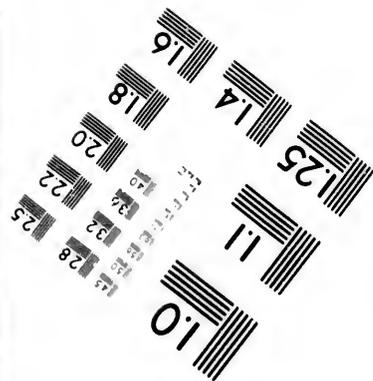
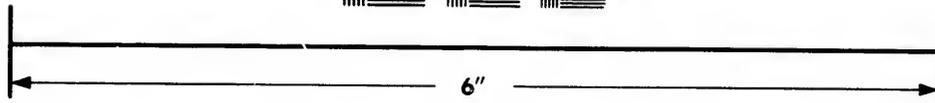
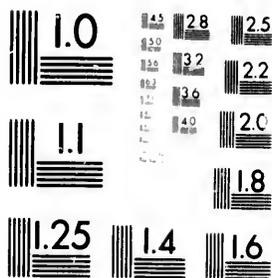


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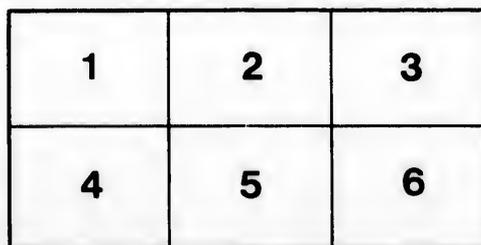
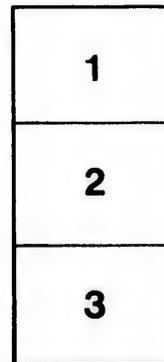
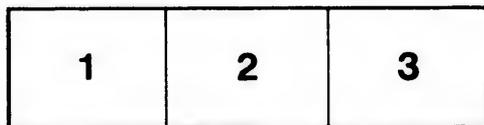
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SIGNS, MANNER AND TIME

OF

Our Lord's Second Coming.

BY

MRS. MARY GILBERT.

184 DeGrassi St., Toronto, Ont.



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THE SIGNS, MANNER AND TIME

OF THE

SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.



WHEN we search the scriptures it should be done with the purest motive, being willing to lay aside our preconceived ideas, and be taught by the spirit of truth. We should ascertain when such and such passages were uttered, and to whom were the words spoken, and under what circumstances were they spoke, for want of this many mistakes are made and false conclusions arrived at. Now with regard to the second coming of Christ, if we read carefully the 24th of Matt., the 13th of Mark, and the 21st of Luke, we have there the signs, the manner, and the time of our Lord's coming, and Christ concludes his remarks by saying: this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled, Matt. xxiv. 34, and he said to his disciples: watch, therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. Now, certainly His coming must be in their day and in that generation, or why would He say so and tell them to watch for it. As there are many figurative expressions used respecting certain events connected with His coming, we must compare scripture with scripture to understand the meaning thereof. When Christ said they should see

the sign of the son of man in heaven, it was in connection with the sun being darkened, the moon withholding her light, the stars falling, and the powers of heaven being shaken, Matt. xxiv. 29, 30. The sun signified the religion of the church, the moon the government of the state, and the stars the judges and doctors of both. Christ meant that in connection with His coming the Jewish heavens should perish and the sun and moon of its glory and happiness be darkened, (brought to nought) as in Rev. vi. 13, 14. Peter said their heavens should pass away with a great noise, and their elements melt with fervent heat, the earth and the works therein burnt up, 2nd of Peter iii. 10. The heavens signified their exalted privileges, their elements the rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic law, in Gal. iv. 3, called elements of the world, and in 9th called weak and beggarly elements. The earth is put to signify the people of the land of Judea, the container put for the contained, as in Jer. xxii. 29, earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord. The literal earth will not be burned up, for in the 119th Psalm and 90th verse it reads, Thou hath established the earth and it abideth, and in Eccl. i. 4, one generation passeth away and another generation cometh, but the earth abideth forever. In prophetic language, great commotions on earth are often represented by the idea of commotions and changes in the heavens. Such expressions were used respecting the downfall of Babylon, Isaiah xiii. 9, 10, and the overthrow of Egypt, Ezk. xxxii. 7, 8, and the last destruction of Jerusalem, called the terrible day of the Lord by Joel ii. 30, 31. Christ said there should be signs in the sun, moon and stars, and upon the

earth distress of nations with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring, etc., Luke xxi. 25, 26, figuratively pointing out the wars and rumors of wars which were the signs of His coming. Especially when Caligula ordered his statue to be set up in the temple of God, which the Jews having refused had every reason to expect a war with the Romans, and were in such consternation on the occasion that they even neglected to till their land. A dreadful war occurred at Cæsarea, where the Jews and Syrians contended about the right of the city, which ended in the total expulsion of the Jews from there and twenty thousand of them killed. The whole Jewish nation being exasperated at this, flew to arms, and burnt and plundered the neighboring cities and villages of the Syrians, making an immense slaughter of the people. The Syrians, in return, destroyed not a less number of the Jews. It is worthy of remark, the Jews themselves said that in the time of the Messiah wars should be stirred up in the world. Rab Eleasar, the son of Abina, said, when ye see kingdom rising against kingdom then expect the immediate appearance of the Messiah. It was further added, there should be famines and earthquakes, and fearful sights and great signs from heaven, Luke xxi. 11. there was a famine foretold by Agabus, in Acts xi. 28, which came to pass in the days of Claudius Cæsar, and it was so severe in Jerusalem that many died for lack of food, hence the necessity of the churches in other places sending help to the poor saints in Jerusalem. Also, there were earthquakes in divers places, and a dreadful one in Judea, accompanied by a dreadful tempest, violent winds, vehement showers, and continual lightnings and thunder,

which caused many to believe that these things portended some uncommon calamity. Josephus, the Jewish historian, in his preface to the Jewish Wars, gives an account of several remarkable signs. First, a star hung over the city like a sword, and a comet continued a whole year. Second, the people being assembled at the feast of unleavened bread, at the ninth hour of the night, a great light shone about the altar and the temple, and this continued for half an hour. Third, the eastern gate of the temple, which was of solid brass and very heavy, and could scarcely be opened or shut by twenty men, and was fastened by strong bars and bolts, was seen at the sixth hour of the night to open of its own accord. Fourth, before sun setting, there were seen over all the country chariots and armies fighting in the clouds, and besieging cities. Fifth, at the feast of Pentecost, when the priests were going into the inner temple by night, to attend their service, they heard first a motion and then a noise, and then a voice as of a multitude, saying, Let us depart hence. Sixth, a man from the country came to the feast of tabernacles, and ran up and down the streets of the city day and night, crying, A voice from the east, a voice from the west, a voice from the four winds; a voice against Jerusalem and the temple, a voice against the bridegrooms and the brides, and a voice against all the people. Though the magistrates endeavored by stripes and tortures to restrain him, yet he cried with a mournful voice, Woe, woe to Jerusalem. Thus he continued to do, until a stone from some sling or engine struck him dead on the spot. If Isaiah had been an eye-witness to it, he could not have spoken in plainer language, Isaiah lxvi. 6 and

15, 16, and in lxx. 12. Notwithstanding those signs, and the advice from wiser men, the seditious went on murdering and plundering, until Cestius Gallas, the President of Syria, came with a powerful army and besieged the city, and had he continued the siege, he would have taken it. But there were Christians there that Christ said should be saved if they continued to the end, and Providence so ordered it that he retreated from the city; and the Jews followed them and made sad havoc in the rear ranks of the Roman army, during which time the city gates being left open, the Christians made their escape. Remembering what Christ told them to do when they saw Jerusalem compassed with armies, Luke xxi. 20, they fled to the mountains of Pella, the other side Jordan (called the wilderness), in the domain of King Agrippa, where they had a place prepared of God, and where they were nourished for a time, times, and half a time (that is three years and a half, or a thousand, two hundred and threescore days, Rev. xii. 6 and 14); in another place forty-two months, all the same amount of time. The seditious continued murdering and plundering until Titus Vespasian came with the Roman armies, and other auxiliaries, like clouds, and never left till the temple and city were destroyed. As predicted by Jer. iv. 13, our Lord said the tribulation would be such as was not since the beginning of the world to that time, no, nor ever should be, Matt. xxiv. 21. No history can furnish us with a parallel to the calamities and miseries of the poor Jews. Rapine, murder, famine and pestilence within; fire and sword, and all the horrors of war without. Our Lord wept at the foresight of these calamities, and it is almost

impossible for any humane person to read the relation of them in Josephus' history without weeping also. They were called the Days of Vengeance, that all things that were written might be fulfilled, Luke xxi. 22. Those were the days in which all the calamities predicted by Moses, Joel, Daniel, and all the prophets, as well as those predicted by our Lord, met in one common centre, and were fulfilled in the most terrible manner on that generation. It was called the battle of the Great Day of God Almighty in Rev. xvi. 14-16, and well may the place be called Armageddon; meaning a place of great slaughter for there were eleven hundred thousand Jews perished in the siege, besides the many thousands destroyed by other means and in other places. Our Lord described the route, as well as the manner in which He would come with the armies (called his mighty angels), to execute his purpose. He said, as the lightning cometh out of the East and shineth unto the West, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be, Matt. xxiv. 27. The Roman armies commenced in the East, and carried on their conquest westward, until they surrounded the city. Thus, where the carcass was, the eagles were gathered together, Matt. xxiv. 28. The Roman armies were called the eagles, because the eagle was their ensign; the Jews was the carcass. His coming also was as visible as lightning, although they could not see Him, in person, with their naked eye; for he came in the like manner in which he went up, Acts i. 9. A cloud received Him out of their sight. Although He was out of sight, they knew He was there. So, in like manner, he came in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory, Matt. xxiv. 30. Then

the tribes of the earth (the Jews) mourned, when they saw Him coming in judgment upon them, as in Rev. i. 7. But how could every eye see Him; just in the same sense we see the wind, by its effects. Christ said, when ye see the south wind blow, ye say there will be heat, Luke xii. 55. They were said to see the wind, when they could only see its effects. In like manner, every eye could see the hand of Him whom they had pierced, was in the judgment that came upon them; and they wailed because of Him. There is no Scripture to prove that Christ will ever come again in the flesh; but rather the contrary, it was said He should come in like manner, not in person, put in power; Paul said, Christ should be known no more after the flesh, 2 Cor. v. 16, and it is vain to expect Him to be located any where on earth. For Christ Himself, said, if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or lo, there, believe it not, Matt. xxiv. 23; and, again, he said, I go to the Father, and ye shall see Me no more, John xvi. 10. He meant in the flesh, in the same sense in which the world would see Him no more, as in John xiv. 19, yet a little while, and the world seeth Me no more. Yet His disciples saw Him, in the sense as the pure in heart see God fully explained in the next four verses of same chapter. But can the Roman armies be called the clouds of heaven. The Assyrian army was called a cloud, on which God rode into Egypt, Isa. xix. 1, and Jer. iv. 13; and the Roman armies were the clouds in which He came in judgment on the Jewish nation. They were called the clouds of heaven, because they were used by the God of heaven, for the accomplishment of His purpose, and because of their exalted position, from

the like of which the King of Babylon fell, Isa. xiv. 12. The Romans being exalted above all other nations, their armies might be called the clouds of heaven. In the 50th Psalm 3-6, it reads, our God shall come and shall not keep silence; a fire shall devour before Him; He shall call to the heavens (the Roman power) above other nations, and to the earth (the nations under their power) that He may judge His people (the Jews), and the heavens shall declare his righteousness, for God is Judge, Himself, and it was so; for when Titus was viewing the fortifications, after the taking of the city, he could not help ascribing his success to God. We have fought, said he, with God on our side, and it is God who pulled the Jews out of their strongholds; for what could machines or the hands of men avail against such towers as these. Thus the high powers, called the heavens, declared the righteousness of God, in His judgment on His people (the Jews). Observe next, the time of Christ's coming. Christ, Himself, said it would be in connection with the shaking of the Jewish heavens, and the sun and moon of their glory passing away. *Then*, said he, (not some time after), but *then*, shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven, Matt. xxiv. 29-30, and that occurred shortly after John had the Revelations of it. For John was banished to the Isle of Patmos in the reign of Nero, who put an end to his own existence in the year 68, and the city and temple was destroyed in the year 70, and as a proof that John had the vision of it before that, read Rev. xi. 1. John had a reed given him with which to measure the temple of God, and the altar, and those who worshipped therein, and in the eighth verse, the city is said to be the place where our

Lord was crucified. John wrote the Revelations some time after he came from there, most likely in the year 69, for that was about the time he wrote his epistles, and he was told he should prophesy again before many peoples and nations, and tongues and kings, Rev. x. 11; and in chapter i. 9, he said, I *was* (he does not say how long ago). but, I *was* in the isle that is called Patmos; and heard a voice saying, What thou seest write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches in Asia: and to the church at Thyatira it was said: That which ye have already, hold fast till I come, Rev. ii. 25. Now, His coming was surely in their day, or how could they hold fast what they had till He came. And as a proof that those things revealed to John were nigh at hand, he was told the time is at hand, Rev. i. 3, and again, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand, Rev. xxii. 10, (that is, the time of their fulfilment), for it all was so near at hand, that in the first verse we read, they were shortly to come to pass. There need be no mistake, for the Revelations came direct from God to Christ, from Christ to the angel, from the angel to John, from John to the seven churches in Asia; and it is handed down to us for our information. We read, the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to shew unto His servants *the* things which must *shortly* be done. Rev. xxii. 6. Observe, the definite article *the* implies the whole of them; and in the last verse it reads, He which testifieth these things saith, surely I come quickly. Amen, said John, even so, come Lord Jesus. John's heart was filled with joy on hearing the word quickly, for he was expecting the Lord's coming ever since he heard the reply made to

Peter, when he asked, What shall this man do? Christ said, If he tarry till I come, what is that to thee. John xxi. 22. After tarrying so long in expectation, he was glad to hear Him say, I come quickly; and John remembered what Christ said to him and the rest of the disciples in Matt. xvi. 28, Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here that shall not taste of death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom. Jesus knew some of them would suffer martyrdom before His coming, but some would live to see it, and John was one who lived to see the kingdom of God come with power, Mark ix. 1, not the vision of it only, as some say, but the realization of it, when Christ came in the glory of His Father, with His angels (the Roman armies), and rewarded men according to their works. Matt. xvi. 27. As He said, Rev. xxii. 12, He rewarded the righteous by delivering them from the destruction that fell on that wicked city called Babylon, and Sodom, and Egypt. Rev. xi. 8. John heard a voice saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins. Rev. xviii. 4. Then the wicked were rewarded according to their works, as Jude said in 14 and 15, Behold He cometh with ten thousand of His saints, to execute judgment, and act as predicted by Isaiah lxiii. 1-6. In Matt. x. we read of Christ sending his twelve apostles to the lost sheep of the house of Israel; and after telling them what persecution they would have, he said, verily I say unto you, ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of Man be come. Matt. x. 23. Some of the apostles would be thus engaged until He came, or He would not have said so. Furthermore, in every chapter of Paul's first and second

Epistles to the Thessalonians there are intimations of Christ's coming in their day, and Paul was glad that they had turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God; and to *wait* for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered them from the wrath that was coming on the unbelieving Jews, 1 Thess., i. 10. Certainly they were expecting Him in their day, or why was Paul glad that they were waiting for Him. There were Christian Jews in Thessalonica, who were persuaded by some party that the day of Christ was at hand; and knowing that would be a day of great tribulation, they were in great trouble about their brethren in Jerusalem, who were represented as dead in the streets of that great city. By the two witnesses, Rev. xi. 8, sometimes the word death is used to signify a loss of privileges, as in Adam's case; sometimes to signify a perilous position, 2 Cor. xi. 23. The Christians in Jerusalem were in a perilous position the while Cestius Gallus' army was round the city, for all were in a state of consternation, represented in Daniel's vision as in the dust of the earth. Dan. xii. 2. But those whose names were found written in the Book of Life were delivered when Cestius Gallus retreated from the city. Then, the Christians represented by the two witnesses coming to life, made their escape when they heard the voice saying, come up hither, Rev. xi. 12. The number two is put to signify the smallest number taken to witness to the truth. They were the smallest number, but was sufficient to witness for Christ. Paul exhorts them not to sorrow for those who were represented dead or asleep, for they were in Christ; therefore, as certain as Christ

died and rose again in triumph over his enemies, so certain would they be raised to a better state at Christ's coming, as Christ said it was the Father's will, that of all who were given him he should lose none, but should be raised up at the last day, John vi. 39-40. Meaning the last day of the Jewish dispensation. Those who were outside Judea were not in such a perilous state as those inside, they were said to be alive, hence he said we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent (go before) them which are asleep, I Thes. iv. 15, meaning that those outside would not go before those in Judea. But those who were represented dead would be raised first, then they outside as well as those in Judea were all caught up together in the clouds. As the word clouds is often used in Scripture to signify numbers, so the different companies of Christians inside and outside Judea were brought together in clouds to the mountains of Pella. Thus they were in God's protection, for they met the Lord in the air (that is, in the open air), on the mountains, and were ever with the Lord; that is in the Christian covenant instead of the Jewish. Their position then being changed, as Paul said, he shall change our vile body, Phil. iii. 21, mark the expression, body (not bodies that are wasted away in the earth), but our body, Paul meant Christ's body of followers, in the original it reads, the body of our humiliation. For the meaning of the word vile see James ii. 2. The word vile raiment means poor raiment; so the Christian body was at that time a poor despised body, represented by Paul as a bare grain trampled under foot, but it did not waste away, it germinated and brought forth a spiritual body,

I Cor. xv. 37-38, and made like unto Christ's glorious body. As Paul said, when Christ who is our life shall appear, we shall appear with him in glory, Col. iii. 4, (in a more glorified state). When Paul wrote his Epistles to Thessalonians, it was 18 years before the coming of Christ; therefore he told them not to be shaken in mind or be troubled as though the day of Christ was at hand; yet believing it possible for them to live to see that day, he prayed that their spirit, soul and body, might be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, I Thes. v. 23. Paul knew they needed the preserving grace of God, in those last days, because of their persecution and trials. It is a mistake to fancy there are any last days to the Christian dispensation, for God is to be glorified in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages world without end, Eph. iii. 21, the last days that Paul spoke of in his Second Epistle to Timothy and 3rd chapter, were not our days, but the days of the apostles as it reads; God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath (not shall) in these last days spoken unto us by his son, Heb. i. 1-2. It is not the son, but the spirit that was in the son, that speaks to us now in this spirit age. Peter spoke of scoffers in those last days of the Jewish dispensation, who said, where is the promise of his coming. Making out that God had forgot his promises; but Peter assured them that God could not forget, for one day was with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. Therefore God was not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness, but was long suffering toward them, not willing

that any should perish; but the day of the Lord did come upon them as a thief in the night, II. Peter iii. 9-10. Paul knew the Lord would not delay his coming, for he said, yet a little while and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry, Heb. x. 37. James said the coming of the Lord was drawing nigh in his day, James v. 7-8. Paul told Timothy to keep the Commandment without spot unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, I. Timothy vi. 14, his coming was certainly expected in Timothy's day, or how could he keep what was committed unto him till he came. Christ himself said his coming would be in connection with those things spoken of in Matt. xxiv. 29-30, and in the 34th verse he said, this generation, meaning the generation then living, should not pass till all those things were fulfilled, observe the word *this* generation means the generation living when the words were spoken; as in Matt. xxiii. 33-34, and in the 36th verse he said, Verily I say unto you, all these things shall come upon *this* generation, meaning the people he was then talking to; and it did come upon that very generation, at the time of Christ's second coming in the clouds of heaven to overthrow the Jewish kingdom, and to establish His own, as in Dan. vii, 13-14; then it was the saints possessed the kingdom also, 22nd verse, for all the visions of Daniel were finished in the year seventy, as it reads, when He shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished, Dan. xii. 7.; their power was scattered in the year seventy by the Roman armies, and they have not been in power since; for Christ said to them, Therefore I say un-

to you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof, and never promised to restore it to them again. The restoration that was promised the Jews was fulfilled when they returned from their captivity, and rebuilt their second temple, an account of which we have in Ezra and Nehemiah; and there is no promise of them ever being established again, and building a third. When Christ said they should be scattered among all nations, He never promised they should be gathered again to their former privileges. But they may be brought into the privileges Christians enjoy, called eternal life, if they remain not in unbelief. It is said in Isaiah, of the increase of Christ's government and peace, there shall be no end; and Isaiah ix. 7, Christ is now sitting on the throne of His Father David. It cannot be the literal throne of David; for Christ said, My kingdom is not of this world; it is a spiritual kingdom; it is the throne of his Father David, on account of the promise made to David that his son should sit upon it: just in the same sense that the promise made to Abraham that in his seed all the nations should be blessed is called the Blessing of Abraham. Read Gal. iii. 8 and 14, the blessing that came on the Gentiles through Christ is called the Blessing of Abraham; so Christ's throne is not literally the throne of his father David; but the throne God promised David his son should sit upon. But the word throne does not always mean a literal throne, it sometimes means an exalted position. God hath highly exalted Christ, and given Him a name which is above every name.

Peter said He was exalted by the right hand of God to

the position He now occupies as Lord and Christ Acts ii, 29-36 which exalted position He will never leave to be located on earth again, as some say ; if so, He will be here or there ; but He said, If any man say unto you, lo ! here is Christ, or there, believe it not. And why should I believe what Christ tells me not believe. Christ said, where two or three are met together in my name there am I in the midst of them. Thus the same blessed Jesus that ascended in a body can be here without that body and be the same Jesus that said, Lo ! I am with you always, unto the end of the world. That was the Jewish world, the world in righteousness that He judged at His second coming. Acts xvii. 31. The only body He will have on earth is the body of which He is said to be the head, for God has given Him to be the head over all to His church, which is His body, Eph. i. 22, that is, those who follow His example, as He said, If a man love Me he will keep My words, and My Father will love him ; and we will come unto him and make our abode with him. John xiv. 23. Then we realize what He prayed for in John xvii. 23 : I in them and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one, being by one spirit baptized into one body, and made to drink into one spirit, I. Cor. xii. 13. That is the true spirit of Christianity, so as to be able to say by works as well as words, *we have the mind of Christ.* I. Cor. ii. 16. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.



