

Signs of Christ's Coming

1. WHAT question did the disciples ask concerning Christ's second coming? Matt. 24: 3.
2. What were some of the signs He mentioned? Matt. 24: 7, 14.
3. How did He foretell the destruction of Jerusalem? Matt. 24: 15-20; Luke 21: 20. Note 1.
4. What tribulation was foretold? Matt. 24: 21, 22. Note 2.
5. What great signs were to follow this period of persecution? Matt. 24: 29; Mark 13: 24; Rev. 6: 12, 13. Notes 3 and 4.
6. What are some of the other signs of Christ's coming? James 5: 1-8; 2 Tim. 3: 1-5.
7. What will be the condition in the world just before Christ comes? Matt. 24: 37-39; Luke 17: 28-30; 21: 25-28.
8. What world movement shows that the coming of Christ is near? 1 Thess. 5: 1-5.
9. What admonition did Christ leave for this generation? Matt. 24: 32-35, 44.

Notes on Reading No. 4

NOTE 1.—In A. D. 60 Paul carried the gospel to Rome. In A. D. 64 he wrote of the "saints" in the emperor's household (Phil. 4: 22); and the same year he said that the gospel had been "preached to every creature which is under heaven" (Col. 1: 23). In October, A. D. 66, Cestius began to besiege Jerusalem. In a mysterious manner he suddenly withdrew from the siege, and the Christians fled, believing that this was the sign given by Christ. Three and a half years later Titus laid siege to the city, overwhelming it in A. D. 70, and during the five months of the siege 1,100,000 Jews perished.

NOTE 2.—The early persecutions against Christians were waged by pagan Rome. For nearly three centuries the church was terribly harassed, Christians being given to wild beasts, smeared with pitch and lashed to poles to serve as torches for the arena, and martyred in other ways till 3,000,000 perished. This was followed by the more terrible persecutions during the time of papal supremacy, adjourned."—*President Dwight, in "Connecticut History more than 100,000,000 lives.* (See Dan. 7: 25; Rev. 13: 5-7.)

NOTE 3.—"The nineteenth of May, 1780, was a remarkably dark day. Candles were lighted in many houses. The birds were silent, and disappeared. The fowls retired to roost. It was the general opinion that the day of judgment was at hand. The legislature of Connecticut was in session at Hartford, but being unable to transact business, adjourned."—*President Dwight, in "Connecticut Historical Collections."*

"The darkness of the following evening was probably as deep and dense as ever had been observed since the Almighty first gave birth to light; it wanted only palpability to render it as extraordinary as that which overspread the land of Egypt in the days of Moses. If every luminous body in the universe had been shrouded in impenetrable shades, or struck out of existence, it was thought the darkness could not have been more complete. A sheet of white paper held within a few inches of the eyes was equally invisible with the blackest velvet."—*"Our First Century," R. M. Devins, p. 94.*

NOTE 4.—The celebrated astronomer and meteorologist, Professor Olmsted, of Yale College, says: "Those who were so fortunate as to witness the exhibition of shooting stars on the morning of Nov. 13, 1833, probably saw the greatest display of celestial fireworks that has ever been since the creation of the world, or at least within the annals covered by the pages of history. . . . The extent of the shower in 1833 was such as to cover no inconsiderable part of the earth's surface, from the middle of the Atlantic on the east to the Pacific on the west; and from the northern coast of South America to undefined regions among the British possessions on the north, the exhibition was visible, and everywhere presented nearly the same appearance."—*"Bible Readings for the Home Circle," p. 321.*