would lose their truth and significance.  
The physical signs shall happen (see Joel  
ii. 31: Hagg. ii. 6, 21, compared with  
Heb. xii. 26, 27) as accompaniments and  
intensifications of the awful state of things  
which the description typifies. The *Sun*  
of this world and the church (Mal. iv. 2:  
Luke i. 78: John i. 9: Eph. v. 14: 2 Pet.  
i. 19) is the Lord Jesus—the *Light*, is the  
Knowledge of Him. The *moon*—human  
knowledge and science, of which it is said  
(Ps. xxxvi. 9), ‘In thy light shall we see  
light :’ reflected from, and drinking the  
beams of, the Light of Christ. The *stars*  
—see Dan. viii. 10—are the leaders and  
teachers of the Church. The Knowledge  
of God shall be obscured—the Truth nigh  
put out—worldly wisdom darkened—the  
Church system demolished, and her teachers  
cast down. And all this in the midst of  
the fearful signs here (and in Luke, vv.  
25, 26, more at large) recounted: not  
*setting aside, but accompanying, their  
literal fulfilment,*

**the powers of the  
heavens]** not the stars, just mentioned ;  
—nor *the angels*, spoken of by and by,  
ver. 31: but most probably the greater  
heavenly bodies, which rule the day and  
night, Gen. i. 16, and are there also distinguished  
from the stars. See notes on  
2 Pet. iii. 10—12, where the stars seem  
to be *included in the elements.* Typically,  
the influences which rule human society,  
which make the political weather fair or  
foul, bright or dark; and encourage the  
fruits of peace, or inflict the blight and  
desolation of war.

**30.**] This then, so  
emphtically placed and repeated, is a  
*definite declaration of time*,—not a mere  
sign of sequence or coincidence, as e.g. in  
ver. 23:—when these things shall have  
been somewhile filling men’s hearts with  
fear,—THEN shall &c. It is quite  
uncertain what the sign shall be :—plainly,  
not *the Son of Man Himself,* as some  
explain it (even Bengel, generally so valuable  
in his explanations, says, “*He Himself  
shall be the sign of Himself*,” and quotes  
Luke ii. 12 as confirming this view ; but  
there the swaddling clothes and the manger  
were the ‘sign,’ not the Child), nor any  
*outward marks on His body*, as His  
wounds; for both these would confuse  
what the prophecy keeps distinct—the  
seeing of the *sign* of the Son of Man,  
and all tribes of the earth mourning,  
and afterwards seeing the *Son of Man  
Himself*. This is manifestly s*ome sign in  
the Heavens,* by which all shall know that  
the Son of Man is at hand. The *Star of  
the Wise Men* naturally occurs to our  
thoughts—but a star would not be a sign  
which all might read.

On the whole  
I think no sign completely answers the  
conditions, but that *of the Cross*:—and  
accordingly we find the Fathers mostly  
thus ‘ing the passage. But as our  
Lord Himself does not answer the question,  
“*What is the sign of thine appearing*?”  
we may safely leave the matter.

**all  
the tribes of the earth]** See Zech. xii. 10—  
14, where the mourning is confined to the  
families of Israel :—here, it is universal:  
see Rev. i. 7; also vi. 15—17. This coming of the Son of Man is not that spoken  
of ch. xxv. 31, but that in 1 Thess. iv. 16,  
17, and Rev. xix. 11 ff.,—*His coming at  
the commencement of the millennial reign  
to establish His Kingdom:* see Dan. vii.  
13, 14.

The power is the *power of  
the Kingdom*, not, the host heaven.

**31.**] *This is not the great Trumpet  
of the general Resurrection* (1 Cor. xv.  
52), except in so far as that may be spoken  
of as including also the first resurrection :  
see on this verse the remarkable opening  
of Ps.l, which is itself a prophecy of  
these same times.

**32, 33, 34.]** {32} The