

angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all the nations." This is popularly regarded as a picture of the Final Judgment of the world ; but it really refers to the judgment of the Gentiles—"the nations"—and there is no reason for pushing it into the remote future. It is a judgment which is in progress now. It is a process of judgment which in the nature of things began the moment the gospel of Christ was preached to the heathen world (34). The triumph of Christ over the Gentile world was part of his Second Coming in his conception. "Immediately after the tribulation of those days"—referring to the destruction of Jerusalem—"shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heaven shall be shaken ; and there shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven : and all tribes of the earth shall mourn, and shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (35). All this was to take place *immediately* after the destruction of Jerusalem. And has it not been fulfilled spiritually in the history of the world ? In the words of Beyschlag : "It has been fulfilled, as all the lights of heaven which formerly shone on humanity have paled before the rising on them of the sign of the Cross, as ideas which seemed to stand firm as the stars, and ordinances which have been maintained for centuries as laws of the world, lost their authority, and the knowledge of Jesus as the King of Heaven, made its way in the self-accusing hearts of men as a higher power of renewal."

The consummate Coming of the Son of Man would, in accordance with this conception, be his final and complete victory over his enemies—the powers of evil and death. We need not believe that he thought of it as spectacular, but inward and spiritual. It will be the final outcome of the process of growth—the historical development—in terms of which

(34). See Whiton's "Beyond the Shadow," p. 165.

(35). Matthew 24 : 29-31.