difficulty in understanding this, if we are  
careful to mark its real place and interpret  
it accordingly. The white robe, in this  
book, is the vestment of acknowledged and  
glorified righteousness in which the saints  
walk and reign with Christ: see ch. iii. 4;  
vii. 13 ff., al. This was given to the martyrs:  
but their prayer for vengeance was  
not yet granted. The Seer saw in vision  
that this was so. The white robe was not  
actually bestowed as some additional boon,  
but seemed in vision to be thus bestowed,  
because in that vision one side only of the  
martyrs’ intermediate state had been presented,  
viz. the fact of their slaughter and  
their collective cry for vengeance. Now,  
as over against that, the other more glorious  
side is presented, viz. that though  
the collective cry for vengeance is not yet  
answered, yet individually they are blessed  
in glory with Christ, and waiting for their  
fellows to be fully complete), **and it was  
said to them that they should rest** (not  
merely, *abstain from their cry for vengeance,  
be quiet;*—but, *rest in blessedness,*  
See ch. xiv. 13, and Dan. xii. 13) **yet a  
little while, until their fellow-servants**  
(a title corresponding to **Master** above)  
**also and their brethren** (the two substantives  
describe the same persons; those  
who are at the same time their fellow-  
servants and their brethren: the former  
term reminding them of the necessity of  
completeness as far as the service of their  
one Master is concerned : the latter, as far  
as they belong to one and the same great  
family) **shall have accomplished** (viz.  
*“their course”*), **who are about to be  
slain as also they were.**

**12—VII. 17.]** OPENING OF THE SIXTH  
SEAL, AND ITS ATTENDANT VISIONS.  
And herein [12—17] *Immediate approach  
of the great day of the Lord*, Matt. xxiv.  
29: (vii. 1–8) *gathering of the elect  
out of the four winds*, Matt. xxiv. 31:  
(vii. 8–17) *vision of the whole glorified  
church*, Matt. xxv.

The interpretation of this sixth seal is a   
crucial point in Apocalyptic exegesis. We  
may unhesitatingly set down all interpretations  
as wrong, which view as the fulfilment  
of this passage any period except  
that of the coming of the Lord. See the  
grounds of this below. {12} **And I saw when  
he opened the sixth seal, and a great  
earthquake took place** (we have no word  
but “*earthquake*” for the word, literally  
**shaking**, here used in the original:  
but it does not by any means cover the  
meaning. For here the heavens are shaken,  
and the sea, and the dry land. See  
Hag. ii. 6, 7, and the comment in Heb.  
xii. 26 f. Compare also Zech. xiv. 4, 5),  
**and the sun became black as sackcloth  
of hair** (see Isa. l. 3. The cloth meant  
is the *cilicium*, or hair cloth: see note on  
Acts xviii. 3. This answers to Matt. xxiv.  
29,—“*Immediately after the tribulation  
of those days, shall the sun be darkened*,”  
...and to *“the sun shall be turned into  
darkness,”* in Joel ii. 31), **and the whole  
moon** (i.e. not the moon in her crescent  
or her incomplete form, but entire; as we  
say, the full moon) **became as blood** (so  
Matt. as before, “*and the moon shall not  
give her light:*” and Joel ii. 31, *“and  
the moon into blood, before the great and  
terrible day of the Lord come”*), {13} **and the  
stars of the heaven fell to the earth** (so  
Matt. as before, “*and the stars shall fall*