But for what were they to wait? “Until both their  
fellow-servants and their brethren” should be slain.  
I am apt to believe, then, that by the first word  
believers in Jesus, the remnant of the Church, are  
meant: and that by the other, Jews and disciples of  
Christ under Antichrist are intended.  
 For there are two great future persecutions supposed  
in the body of the book, one by Babylon, before Antichrist  
has appeared; or, at least, before he has appeared in his  
true character as the Blasphemer. xvii. 6. But there is  
also the war of Antichrist against them (xiii. 7), when  
whoever will not worship his image is to be killed. 15.  
 The dwellers on earth must first be proved genuine  
*children* of the destroyers of God’s saints of old, ere the  
vengeance foretold by the Saviour shall descend. To  
this seal our Lord’s words apply. “*Fill ye up then the  
measure of your fathers*.” “*That upon you may come all  
the righteous blood shed upon the earth*. Verily I say  
unto you, *All these things shall come upon this generation*”  
(Matt. xxiii. 32, 34-36).  
 This is the reason of the pause after the seventh  
seal. Persecution, after the terrors of the sixth seal,  
is stunned. It is only by degrees, as fears wear away,  
that men grow bold enough to injure and to slay God’s  
saints. With answering slowness does judgment move.  
 When men shall slay the servants of God, *on principle*,  
because they hinder the worldly in careless enjoyment  
of the things of time, then will the time of recompense  
be come, because the iniquity of man and his rebellion  
of spirit against the God of heaven will be matured.  
 How vainly, then, do those Christians who do not  
study prophecy expect that the earth is about to  
submit itself, all but universally, to Christ! Moreover,  
this passage gives us to understand that the promised  
happiness of earth cannot arrive till a period of awful  
judgment for the sin of putting to death the servants  
of God, is past.