They are “*two*” witnesses.1 “Two or three witnesses”  
is the number required, by both the law and the gospel,  
in order to substantiate a truth. Deut. xvii. 6; xix.  
15; Matt. xviii. 16.  
 Who are they? They are ENOCH and ELIJAH:2 as  
will be set forth more particularly presently.  
 They are a new order of witness, quite unlike the  
Church, both in position and character. John was in  
Patmos in patience and suffering. These are to face  
their enemies on the very ground of their power, and  
to slay them. John is informed of the place they were  
occupying during his day. They were then already  
“standing before the Lord of earth.” John was to be  
on high in the refuge of the heaven: these, in the focus  
of judgment. John was the prophet of the temple:  
  
 1 Alford says well, “The article (τοις) seems as if the Two Witnesses were well known, and distinct in their individuality. The  
(δυσιν) ‘two’ is essential to the prophecy, and is not to be explained away. No interpretation can be right, which does not,  
either in individuals, or in characteristic lines of testimony,  
retain and bring out this dualism.”  
 2 That this was the early tradition can be shown, by the  
Apocryphal writings which have come down to us. In the  
Arabic history of “Joseph the Carpenter” occurs the following  
passage. “And I say unto you, O my brethren, that it is necessary that these very persons [Enoch and Elijah, above mentioned] should at the end of the times return to the world, and  
die; in the day, that is, of commotion, terror, anguish, and  
affliction. For the false Christ will slay their bodies, and pour out  
their blood like water, because of the reproach to which they will  
expose him, and the ignominy which while alive they will inflict  
on him, by detecting his impiety.”—*Thilo’s God. Apoc.* p. 60.  
 In the Gospel of Nicodemus is the following passage. “I am  
Enoch who pleased God, and was translated by him. And this is  
Elijah the Tishbite. We are also to live to the end of the age:  
but then we are about to be sent by God to resist Antichrist, and  
be slain by him, and to rise after three days, and to be caught up  
in the clouds to meet the Lord.”—*Ibid*., p. 758. See also the  
Apocryphal Apocalypse of John mentioned by Moses Stuart in  
his comment on the Revelation, p. 95.