these, of the outer court. John sees within the cloud  
the Mighty One, the source of their mission: they are  
outside it.  
 “They *shall* prophesy.” The time of their appearing was to follow on the giving up of the temple, and  
the city. Lest it should seem to be owing to God’s  
inability to defend His own property against the armed  
sons of earth, these are sent, who are able, though unarmed, to defy the stoutest mail-clad warriors of the  
Gentiles.  
 The duration of their prophecy is given: it shall be  
for 1,260 days. It is the first half of the last seven  
years of the Time of the End. It immediately precedes  
the reign of the False Christ. As, for three years and a  
half Jesus the first Witness and Martyr of the New Covenant was rejected by Israel; so, for the same space,  
will these two testify to both Jew and Gentile, and be  
rejected also. The fact that their testimony is not to  
begin till after the trumpets have commenced; and the  
additional fact that it is to last for three years and a  
half, are further proofs that it is not of the Church.  
The Church is to look for the return of Jesus, without  
any events interposed: while signs of various kinds  
must precede the manifestation of the Son of Man to  
the *Jew* and to the *nations*.  
 The time of their testimony is expressed in “days,”  
not in “months.” I believe this is because their mission  
carries mercy to the people of God, and even to the  
Gentiles. This is, I suppose, the “little help” wherewith the Lord’s servants in Judaea are hepled [*sic*]. Dan. xi.  
34. So the time of feeding the woman in the desert  
is expressed, as an act of mercy, in “days” also.  
“That they should feed her there a thousand two  
hundred and three score *days*” (xii. 6).  
 They are to prophesy, “clothed in sackcloth.”1  
  
1 Alford says well, “Certainly this portion of the prophetic description strongly favours the individual interpretation. For  
first, it is hard to conceive how whole bodies of men and churches could be thus described: and secondly, the principal symbolical interpreters have left out, or passed very slightly, this important  
particular. One does not see how bodies of men who lived like  
other men [their being the victims of persecution is another  
matter] can be said to have prophesied, *clothed in sackcloth*.”