How were there names of blasphemy on the earlier  
forms of government? “But there were more than  
seven emperors: why are but seven selected?” There  
were more churches then [than] seven: why were but seven  
selected?  
 Out of the many emperors of Rome, how are we to  
select the seven? The task is a difficult one. But  
little is said of the “five who had fallen,” and it is  
with regard to these that the difficulty mainly lies.  
But there are, I believe, two principles to guide us.  
 1. They must be kings who assumed the “names of  
blasphemy,” or were worshipped as gods. xiii. 1.  
 2. They were also, if I mistake not, and as a moral  
consequence, cut off by a violent death. This is  
asserted of five of them. “The five are fallen.” The  
sixth, if he were Domitian, was also slain. The  
seventh, yet to come, is (as we know by xiii. 3, 14) to  
be cut off by violence.  
 That the word “fallen” applies most forcibly to a  
violent death will be proved by the following instances:  
Judges iii. 25, 27; 2 Sam. i. 19, 25, 27, etc. So also  
Rev. xviii. 2.  
 The five first, then, would be—  
 1. Julius Cesar, assassinated. He was worshipped  
as a god. He is reckoned the first emperor by Suetonius, Dio Cassius, and Josephus.  
 2. Tiberius.1  
 3. Caligula, assassinated.  
 4. Claudius, poisoned.  
 5. Nero, committed suicide.  
  
1 “Some are of opinion that a slow-consuming poison was  
given him by Caius. Others say that during the intermission of  
a fever, with which he happened to be seized, food was denied  
him. Others report, that he was stifled by a pillow thrown upon  
him”: *Suetonius*, § 73. If these reports be not considered  
tenable, then Romulus would be the first. He was both assassinated and worshipped.