while our Lord is rejected, is the exercise of judgment  
“before the time.” There is a judging indeed of those  
within the Church; but, as regards the world, the  
apostle disclaims it. “What have I to do to judge  
them that are without? do not ye judge them that are  
within? But them that are without God will judge”1  
(1 Cor. v. 12, 13).  
 Jesus Himself, when asked to decide in a civil suit,  
refused. “Man, who made Me a judge, or a divider  
over you?” (Luke xii. 14). He refused to judge, because, as He said, He came not to judge, but to save the  
world. John xii. 47.  
 But now Jesus is sent forth with power to reign, and  
to subdue all to His Father.  
 Hence now is fulfilled the word, “Do ye not know  
that the saints shall judge the world?” “Know ye  
not that we shall judge angels? How much more  
things that pertain unto this life?” (1 Cor. vi. 2, 3).  
 “And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded.” “How,” say some, “can a soul be seen?”  
Very easily: the soul or ghost resembles the body  
which it has left, and is perfectly an object of sight,  
although it cannot be handled. Thus Saul saw the  
soul or ghost of Samuel.  
 Why it is noticed so specially, that John saw the  
souls of “the *beheaded with an axe*,” it is not easy to  
say. It is not meant to exclude those slain by other  
modes of death. Else the apostle Peter would be shut  
out, because he was crucified; the apostle James, and  
John Baptist, for they were slain, not with an axe, but  
with a sword; and John himself, who was put into a  
cauldron of boiling oil, but escaped alive. So also the  
Two Witnesses would be excluded, for they are to be  
crucified; and those who have endured the more fearful  
  
1 So read the best MSS., and the critical editions.