

WAR INCONSISTENT  
WITH THE  
RELIGION OF JESUS CHRIST

BY

DAVID LOW DODGE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY

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## TRANSCRIBER’S NOTES

I can add nothing to describe Mr. Dodge or the importance of this book, for Mr. Mead’s biography is quite complete. I have made minor changes to grammar, archaic style, sentence structure, and words too far out of modern usage, but I have tried to be careful in all cases to preserve the original sense of the text. The footnotes that are mine are explicitly marked as such. Scanning and proofreading are not 100% accurate, so please bring any mistakes to my attention so that I can correct them. This transcription is under no copyright protection. It is my gift to you. You may freely copy, print, and transmit it, but please do not change or sell it.

February 2007  
Tom Lock

# INTRODUCTION

To David Low Dodge of New York belongs the high honor of having written the first pamphlets published in America directed expressly against the war system of nations, and of having founded the first peace society ever organized in America or in the world. His first pamphlet, *The Mediator's Kingdom not of this World*, was published in 1809. His second and more important pamphlet, *War Inconsistent with the Religion of Jesus Christ*, was prepared for the press in 1812. This was two years before the publication of Noah Worcester's *Solemn Review of the Custom of War*, which was issued in Boston on Christmas Day, 1814. Early in 1812, Mr. Dodge and his friends in New York deliberated on the expediency of forming a peace society; but, on account of the excitement attending the war with Great Britain, this was postponed until 1815. In August of that year the New York Peace Society, the first in the world, was organized, with Mr. Dodge as its president. This was four months before the organization of the Massachusetts Peace Society (December 26, 1815) under the leadership of Noah Worcester, and nearly a year before the English Peace Society, the first in Europe, was formed (June 14, 1816) in London.

The preeminent historical interest attaching to Mr. Dodge's pioneering work in the peace cause in this country would alone justify and indeed seem to command the republication of his pamphlets at this time, when the great ideas for which he so courageously and prophetically stood are at last winning the general recognition of humane and thoughtful men. But it is not merely historical interest that warrants a revival of attention to these almost forgotten papers. Their intrinsic power and worth are such as make their reading, especially that of the second essay, *War Inconsistent with the Religion of Jesus Christ*, which stands first in the present volume, edifying and inspiring today. Marked by few literary graces and cast in a theological mold which the critical thought of the present has in large measure outgrown, there is a force of thought, a moral earnestness, a persevering logic, a common sense, a hatred of inhumanity, a passion for justice, a penetration, and a virtue in them, which commend them to the abiding and reverent regard of all who work for the peace and order of the world. Among such workers today are men of various political philosophies, and perhaps only a small minority are nonresistants of the extreme type of David L. Dodge; but to that minority, we cannot fail to remark, belongs the greatest and most influential of all the peace prophets of this time, Leo Tolstoy. None can read these old essays without being impressed by the fact that their arguments are essentially the same as those of the great Russian. There is little indeed of the Tolstoy's thunder and lightning, the pathos, wrath, and rhetoric, the poetry and prophecy, in these old-fashioned pages; but the doctrine is the same as that of *Bethink Yourselves* and *Patriotism versus Christianity*.<sup>1</sup> In his central thought and purpose, in his religious trust and reliance upon the Christian principle, the New York merchant was a Tolstoy a hundred years before his time.

David Low Dodge was born June 14, 1774, in that part of Pomfret, Connecticut, now called Brooklyn. This was the home of Israel Putnam; and David Dodge's father, a farmer and carpenter, was Putnam's neighbor and friend, and may well have been near him when in April, 1775, upon hearing of the battle of Lexington, he left his plow in the furrow and started to join the forces gathering at Cambridge. David Dodge's father, grandfather, and great-grandfather each bore the name of David Dodge. The great-grandfather was a Congregational minister, who was understood to have come from Wales – a learned and wealthy man, who was for a while settled in the vicinity of Cape Ann in Massachusetts. The grandfather, who also received a liberal education, probably in England, came into

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<sup>1</sup> Transcriber's note – Probably *Christianity and Patriotism*.

the possession of his father's estate, for that day a large one, and we are not informed whether he followed any profession or regular business. He was a man fully six feet tall, of great muscular power, and a lover of good horses, on which he spent much time and money. He married Ann Low, from a wealthy Massachusetts family, and settled in Beverly, where their sons David and Samuel were born, and where the family fortunes became much embarrassed. In about 1757, the family removed to Pomfret, Connecticut, and the boys, whose education at the hands of their mother had been but slight, were apprenticed, David to a carpenter and Samuel to a shoemaker. Their father, obtaining at this time a commission in the army invading Canada, met his death in a bateau that attempted to descend the falls of the Oswego and was dashed to pieces on the rocks with the loss of every soul on board.

David Low Dodge's mother, when a girl, was Mary Stuart, and when she married his father, in 1768, was a widow bearing the name of Earl. The young husband hired a small farm, the wife by her industry and economy had furniture sufficient to begin housekeeping, and the little home was founded in which David Low Dodge's only sister Mary was born in 1770. Three years later the father hired a more expensive place in the same town, where the boy was born in 1774. "During that year," he writes in his autobiography, "my father became serious, and commenced family prayer. He was educated in the old semi-Arminian views of his mother and the halfway covenant. My mother was a rigid Calvinist of the Whitefield school. Neither of them ever made a public profession of religion, but they were careful to observe external ordinances, catechize their children, and give religious instruction. They were honest, industrious, temperate, kind-hearted people, universally respected and esteemed by all who were acquainted with them."

Such was the atmosphere in which the boy grew up. "The American Revolution at this period was convulsing the whole country, drafting and enlisting soldiers. Wagons were needed for the army, and by the advice of the Putnams, the old general and his son Israel, who was about two years younger than my father, he was induced to engage in the manufacture of continental wagons. He hired a convenient place for carpenters and blacksmiths, took several journeymen into the family, and invested all his earnings in the business." The boy's half-brothers, William and Jesse Earl, entered the army at the tender ages of fourteen and sixteen, endured battles, sickness, and every privation, and both died towards the close of the war, the event almost wrecking the nervous system of the mother, a woman of acute sensibility. Thus early were the horrors of war brought personally home to the boy. He remembered hearing the distant cannonading when New London was burned by the British, and the exclamation of the man beside him, "Blood is flowing today." "News came the next morning that the forts were stormed, the garrisons put to the sword, New London burnt, and the British were marching upon Norwich, and would proceed up into the country. My mother wrung her hands, and asked my father if we had not better pack up some things to conceal them."

The boy's education was slight and fragmentary. The summer he was six years old he attended the school of a venerable Irish maiden lady about sixty years of age, learning Watts' *Divine Songs*, texts of Scripture, and the *Shorter Catechism*. From the age of seven to fourteen – the family now living on a farm in the neighboring town of Hampton – he attended the district school for two terms each winter, having no access to any other books than the primer, spelling book, arithmetic, and Bible. "I used often, when not at work in the shop evenings, to retire to the old kitchen fireplace, put my lamp into the oven, and, sitting with my back against it, take my arithmetic, slate, and pencil, and try to cipher a little. I often think how I should have been delighted to have had one fifth part of the advantages enjoyed by most of my descendants." Confined to the house for seven weeks a little later as the result of accidents, he turned hungrily to such books as he could secure – Dilworth's *Arithmetic*, Webster's *Abridged Grammar*, and Salmon's *Universal English Geography*. "This opened a new and astonishing field to me for contemplation. I now obtained the first glimpse of the boundaries of land and water, of the lofty

mountains, and of the mighty rivers that had cut their channels through the earth. I read and surveyed the maps and meditated upon them until I began to lecture to my young companions, and was considered quite learned in geography. Having an object in view, I began to thirst for knowledge, and succeeded in borrowing in succession *The Travels of Cyrus*, *Xerxes' Expedition into Greece*, *The History of Alexander the Great*, and *Hannibal's Invasion of Rome*." He proposed and brought about the formation of a society of young men in the town, for the improvement of minds and manners. There were fourteen young men, with an equal number of young women presently added, each furnishing a useful book as the beginning of a library. "We obtained some of the British classics, such as the *Spectator*, *Guardian*, etc., with a few histories; the subjects formed a foundation for conversation when we met together."

Now the young man's ambition turned from farming to school teaching. He began with district schools, becoming a successful teacher from the start, prosecuting his own studies assiduously in every leisure hour, fired with a desire to improve the schools, which were everywhere as wretched as can well be imagined. For some months in 1795, he left teaching to join other young men in building a bridge at Tiverton, Rhode Island. Then he attended the academy at North Canterbury, Connecticut, under the charge of the eminent teacher, John Adams. "This was the only opportunity I ever enjoyed of attending a good school, and this was abridged to fulfill my engagement to teach the town school in Mansfield." In 1796 he opened a private school in Norwich, adding the next year a morning school for young ladies and an evening school for apprentices and clerks, all of which flourished. During this time he was profoundly interested in religious matters, attending many revivals and becoming more and more concerned with moral and social problems. Now, too, he married, his wife being a daughter of Aaron Cleveland of Norwich, a strong character, afterwards a clergyman, "whose name you will find enrolled among the poets of Connecticut," and who as early as 1775 published a poem on slavery, which, condemning slavery as wholly anti-Christian, attracted a good deal of notice. He was the first man in Connecticut to arraign slavery publicly. Elected to the General Assembly from Norwich on that issue, he introduced a bill in behalf of emancipation.

With health somewhat impaired and with family cares increasing, David Dodge now turned from teaching to trade. First it was as a clerk in Norwich, then as a partner in a general store, then as head of various dry goods establishments in Hartford and other Connecticut towns, always and everywhere successful. In 1805, Messrs. S. and H. Higginson of Boston, cousins of his wife, a firm of high standing and large capital, made him a proposition to enter into a co-partnership with a view to establishing an extensive importing and jobbing store in the city of New York; and he accepted the proposition, going to New York the next year to take charge of the concern in that city. He took a store in Pearl Street, and the year afterwards the family took possession of the house connected with the store, still reserving the house in Hartford as a retreat in case of yellow fever in New York. From this time until his death, April 23, 1852, New York was, with occasional interruptions, his home and the center of his varied and ever enlarging activities. Just before the outbreak of the war with England, his partners became bankrupt through losses in extensive shipping of American produce to Europe. "Bonaparte sprung his trap upon more than a million dollars of their property." Mr. Dodge now established cotton factories in Connecticut, and later commenced anew the dry goods business in New York, his home for years alternating between New York and the Norwich neighborhood; and for the nine years following 1835 he occupied a large farm in Plainfield, New Jersey. Active as was his business life, and faithful his devotion to his large business affairs – he came to rank with the most prominent mercantile men of his day – his mind was always intent upon social and religious subjects. "During the years of 1808 to 1811, our business became extensive and demanded much thought and attention; yet I think my affections were on the subject of religion." Revivals of religion, the interests of his church in Norwich or New York, the improvement of the lives of his factory operatives, the organization in New York of the

Christian Friendly Society for the Promotion of Morals and Religion – such were the objects which commanded him. Throughout his long residence in New York he was a prominent worker in the Presbyterian Church, for many years an elder in the church. He took a leading part in organizing the New York Bible Society and the New York Tract Society, was much engaged in the early missionary movements in New York, and in promoting the education of young men for the ministry. He was a lover of knowledge, a great reader, and one who thought and wrote as he read. Deeply interested in history, ancient and modern, his chief interest was in theological discussion. He was familiar with the chief theological controversies of the day, and upon many of them committed his views to writing. His knowledge of the Bible was remarkable; he read it through critically in course forty-two times. He held firmly the Calvinistic system of doctrine, and he addressed to his children a series of letters, characterized by great ability and logical force, in defense of the faith, and constituting together a compendious system of theology.

Several of these letters are included in the memorial volume published for the family in 1854 under the editorial supervision of Rev. Matson M. Smith. This volume contains, besides the two essays on war here reprinted, and various verses and letters, the interesting autobiography that he prepared, at the request of his children, a few years before his death, and a supplementary biographical sketch by his pastor, Rev. Asa D. Smith. In the mass of manuscripts which he left behind was an essay upon “The Relation of the Church to the World” and one upon “Retributive Judgment and Capital Punishment,” to which he was sharply opposed. He was opposed indeed to so much in human governments as now constituted – “whose ultimate reliance,” he said, “is the sword,” and whose laws he felt to be so often contrary to the laws of Christ to which he gave his sole allegiance – that he would neither vote nor hold office. Strict and inflexible as he was in his views of political and religious duty, he was one of the most genial and delightful of men, a Christian in whom there was no guile, fond of the young, affectionate, courteous, “given to hospitality,” and “careful habitually to make even the conventionalities of life a fitting accompaniment and expression of the inward principle of kindness.” A face as strong as it is gentle, and as gentle as it is strong, is that which looks at us in the beautiful portrait preserved in the family treasures.

The character and influence of the family that he founded in New York, during the three generations that have followed, constitute an impressive witness to David Dodge’s force and worth, his religious consecration, and high public spirit. At the junction of Broadway and Sixth Avenue stands the statue of his son, William Earl Dodge, whose life of almost fourscore years ended in 1883. For long years the head of the great house of Phelps, Dodge & Co., the manager of immense railway, lumber, and mining interests, the president of the New York Chamber of Commerce, a representative of New York in Congress, a leader in large work for temperance, for the freedmen, for the Indians, for theological education, for a score of high patriotic and philanthropic interests, New York had in his time no more representative, more useful, or more honored citizen. And what is said of him may be said in almost the same words of William Earl Dodge, his son, who died but yesterday, and who combined broad business and philanthropic activities in the same strong and influential way as his father and grandfather before him. President of many religious and benevolent associations, he was preeminently a patriot and an international man. The logic of his life and of his heritage placed him naturally at the head of the National Arbitration Committee, which was appointed at the great conference on international arbitration held at Washington in the spring of 1896, following the anxiety attendant upon President Cleveland’s Venezuelan message – a committee which, under his chairmanship, and since his death that of Hon. John W. Foster, has during the decade rendered such great service to the peace and arbitration cause in this country. It is to be noted also that the names of his son and daughter, Cleveland H. Dodge and Grace H. Dodge, names so conspicuously associated today with charitable, religious, and



educational efforts in New York, are associated, too, like his with the commanding cause of the world's peace and better organization; both names stand upon the American Committee of the Thirteenth International Peace Congress, which met in Boston in 1904. Thus have the generations that have followed him well learned and strongly emphasized the lesson taught by David Dodge almost a century ago, that war is "inhuman, unwise, and criminal," and "inconsistent with the religion of Jesus Christ."

It was in 1805 that a startling personal experience prompted the train of thought which soon and forever made David L. Dodge the advocate of the thoroughgoing peace principles with which his name is chiefly identified, and led him to condemn all violence, even in self-defense, in dealings between men, as between nations. Accustomed to carry pistols when traveling with large sums of money, he was almost led to shoot his landlord in a tavern at Providence, Rhode Island, who by some blunder had come into his room at night and suddenly awakened him. The thought of what his situation and feelings would have been, had he taken the man's life, shocked him into most searching thinking. For two or three years his mind dwelt on the question. He turned to the teaching and example of Christ, and became persuaded that these were inconsistent with violence, the carrying of deadly weapons, and war. The common churchman sanctioned such things, but not the early Christians; and he found strong words condemning war in Luther, Erasmus, the Moravians, and the Quakers. Discussing the matter with many pious and Christian men, he found them generally avoiding the gospel standard. He was shocked by the "general want of faith in the promises," but he himself laid aside at once his pistols and the fear of robbers. He became absolutely convinced that fighting and warfare were "unlawful for the followers of Christ," and from then on he began to bear public testimony against the war spirit.

Early in the spring of 1809 he published his essay, *The Mediator's Kingdom not of this World*, which attracted so much attention that in two weeks nearly a thousand copies were sold. Three literary men joined in preparing a spirited and sarcastic criticism of it, and he immediately published a rejoinder. *The Mediator's Kingdom* was republished in Philadelphia and in Providence, and Mr. Dodge writes truly: "These publications gave the first impulse in America, if we except the uniform influence of the Friends, to inquiry into the lawfulness of war by Christians. Some who were favorable to the doctrines of peace judged that, with a bold hand, I had carried the subject too far; and doubtless, as it was new and had not been much discussed, I wrote too unguardedly, not sufficiently defining my terms. The Rev. Dr. Noah Worcester was one who so judged, and a few years after he published his very spirited and able essay, *A Solemn Review of War*." This famous essay of Worcester's represents the platform of the great body of American peace workers for a century, the position of men like Channing and Ladd and Jay and Sumner; but to a nonresistant and opponent even of self-defense, like David Dodge, these seemed the exponents of a halfway covenant.

Mr. Dodge entered into private correspondence on the lawfulness of war with Rev. Lyman Beecher, Rev. Aaron Cleveland, his father-in-law, Rev. John B. Romeyn, and Rev. Walter King. He preserved among his manuscripts letters of twenty-five pages from Dr. Romeyn and Mr. Cleveland, and copies of his reply to Dr. Romeyn (one hundred and thirty-two pages) and to Dr. Beecher (forty-four pages). Important letters from Dr. Beecher and Governor Jay he had lost. All these took the position of Dr. Worcester, sanctioning strictly defensive war in extreme cases – all except Mr. Cleveland, who finally came into complete accord with Mr. Dodge, and published two able sermons on "The Life of Man Inviolable by the Laws of Christ."

Early in 1812 the friends of peace whom Mr. Dodge had gathered about him in New York conferred upon the forming of a peace society, "wholly confined to decided evangelical Christians, with a view to diffusing peace principles in the churches, and avoiding all party questions." There being at this juncture, however, intense political feeling over the threatened war with Great Britain, they feared their motives would be misunderstood, and decided for the moment simply to act individually in diffusing

information. Mr. Dodge was appointed to prepare an essay on the subject of war, stating and answering objections; and, removing at this time to Norwich, he there, in a period of great business perplexity, completed his remarkable paper on "War Inconsistent with the Christian Religion," which was published in the very midst of the war with England.

Upon his return to New York, the friends of peace there had two or three meetings relative to the organization of a society; and in August, 1815, they formed the New York Peace Society, of between thirty and forty members, their strict articles of association condemning all war, offensive and defensive, as wholly opposed to the example, spirit, and precepts of Christ. The peace societies formed immediately afterwards in Massachusetts, Ohio, Rhode Island, and London were organized, according to Mr. Dodge, without any knowledge of each other, the movements being the simultaneous separate results of a common impulse. Of the New York society Mr. Dodge was unanimously elected president. Monthly meetings were arranged, and, at the first of these, Mr. Dodge read an address upon "The Kingdom of Peace under the Benign Reign of the Messiah," of which a thousand copies were at once printed and circulated. Within two years the society had increased to sixty members, men active not only against war – which the society regarded as "the greatest temporal evil, as almost every immorality is generated in its prosecution, and poverty, distress, famine, and pestilence follow in its train" – but in all the benevolent enterprises of that day. "Several respectable clergymen united with the society – Rev. Drs. E. D. Griffin and M. L. Parvine, Rev. E. W. Baldwin (to whose pen we were much indebted), Rev. Samuel Whelpley, and his son, Rev. Melancthon Whelpley, Rev. H. G. Ufford, and Rev. S. H. Cox. Dr. Cox, however, afterwards entertained different views on the subject." The New York Peace Society had friendly correspondence with all the other peace societies, and for several years took two hundred copies of Dr. Worcester's *Friend of Peace*. This seems finally to have contributed to divide the society, some relinquishing the nonresistant views of Mr. Dodge and adopting Worcester's less extreme position. But our brave forerunner of Tolstoy was a "thorough," and never wavered. "If it was morally wrong for individuals to quarrel and fight, instead of returning good for evil," – these are his last words on the subject in his autobiography – "it was much more criminal for communities and nations to return evil for evil, and not strive to overcome evil with good. In fact, the great barrier to our progress was the example of our fathers in the American Revolution. That they were generally true patriots, in the political sense of the term, and many hopefully pious, I would not call in question, while I consider them as ill directed by education as St. Paul was when on his way to Damascus."

The New York Peace Society maintained its existence and work for many years. In 1828 it united with other societies in the creation of the American Peace Society, which was organized in New York on May 8 that year on the initiative of William Ladd. After this the New York society seems to have done little separate work, and finally its independent existence ceased. Mr. Dodge assisted in the organization of the new national society, and presided at its first annual meeting, May 13, 1829. He was chosen a member of its board of directors, and later became a life director, maintaining his connection with the society until his death in 1852, faithful to the end to the radical views by which he had become so powerfully possessed almost half a century before.

For two generations New York has been without a local peace society. The services of eminent individual citizens of the city and state of New York for the peace cause during that period, however, have been signal. Judge William Jay of New York was, for a decade, president of the American Peace Society – the important decade covering the great peace congresses in Europe at the middle of the last century; and it was his proposal that an arbitration clause should be attached to all future commercial treaties which furnished the basis for the most constructive debates of the first congress, that at London in 1843. The three really important members of the American delegation at The Hague Conference were citizens of New York: Andrew D. White, Seth Low, and Frederick W. Holls. A remarkable plan

adopted by the New York State Bar Association suggested important features of The Hague Court as finally constituted. It is a citizen of New York, Andrew Carnegie, who has given \$1,500,000 for a worthy building for the court at The Hague – a temple of peace. Mr. Carnegie, whose influence in behalf of international fraternity is perhaps second to that of no other today, has also given \$5,000,000 to establish a pension fund for “heroes of peace,” whose heroism, too long comparatively neglected, he rightly sees to be not less than the heroism of the soldier. The most important series of arbitration conferences in recent times have been those at Lake Mohonk, in the state of New York, arranged by Albert K. Smiley – conferences of growing size and importance, commanding world-wide attention, and performing for this country almost the same service performed for France and England by their national peace congresses. Finally, it must not be forgotten that Theodore Roosevelt, the President of the United States, through whose initiative the second Hague Conference will presently meet, is also a citizen of New York.

At this very time a promising movement is gaining head to organize once more in David Dodge’s city a New York Peace Society. At one of the recent Mohonk conferences, a large committee of New York men, under the chairmanship of Mr. Warner Van Norden, was formed for conference with this end in view. Upon the American committee of the International Peace Congress, which met in Boston in 1904, were no less than sixteen residents of the city of New York: Andrew Carnegie, Hon. Oscar S. Straus, Hon. George F. Seward, Walter S. Logan, Felix Adler, William D. Howells, Mrs. Charles Russell Lowell, Mrs. Anna Garlin Spencer, Miss Grace H. Dodge, Rev. Josiah Strong, Rev. Charles E. Jefferson, Cleveland H. Dodge, George Foster Peabody, Professor John B. Clark, Leander T. Chamberlain, and J. G. Phelps Stokes. In the week following the Boston congress a series of great peace meetings was held in New York, at the Cooper Union and elsewhere, arranged by members of this committee; and out of all this a new impulse has come to plans for local organization in New York. As one result, a strong society was formed by the Germans of the city, and a large Women’s Peace Circle has since been organized and begun important educational work. The larger New York Peace Society is now certainly a thing of the near future. To the men and women who will constitute that society, the noble body of those now working in their various ways in the great city for the cause of peace, is dedicated especially this republication of the old essays of David Dodge, the founder of the first peace society in the world, who by his pioneering and prophetic service gave to New York a place so significant in the history of what is today the world’s most commanding cause.

September 1905  
Edwin D. Mead



# WAR INCONSISTENT WITH THE RELIGION OF JESUS CHRIST

Humanity, wisdom, and goodness at once combine all that can be great and lovely in man. Inhumanity, folly, and wickedness reverse the picture, and at once represent all that can be odious and hateful. The former is the spirit of Heaven, and the latter the offspring of hell. The spirit of the gospel not only breathes “glory to God in the highest, but on earth peace, and good will to men.” The wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated; but the wisdom from beneath is earthly, sensual, and devilish.

It is exceedingly strange that anyone under the light of the gospel, professing to be guided by its blessed precepts, with the Bible in his hand, while the whole creation around him is so often groaning under the weight and terrors of war, should have doubts whether any kind of wars under the gospel dispensation, except spiritual warfare, can be the dictate of any kind of wisdom except that from beneath; and much more so, to believe that they are the fruit of the Divine Spirit, which is love, joy, and peace.

An inspired apostle has informed us from whence come wars and fighting. They come from the lusts of men that war in their members. Ever since the fall, mankind has had naturally within it a spirit of pride, avarice, and revenge. The gospel is directly opposed to this spirit. It teaches humility, it inculcates love, it breathes pity and forgiveness even to enemies, and forbids rendering evil for evil to any man.

Believing as I do, after much reflection and, as I trust, prayerful investigation of the subject, that all kinds of carnal warfare are unlawful upon gospel principles, I shall now endeavor to prove that war is INHUMAN, UNWISE, and CRIMINAL, and then make some general remarks, and state and answer several objections. In attempting to do this I shall not always confine myself strictly to this order of the subject, but shall occasionally make such remarks as may occur, directly or indirectly, to show that the whole genius of war is contrary to the spirit and precepts of the gospel.



# WAR IS INHUMAN

## *1. BECAUSE IT HARDENS THE HEART AND BLUNTS THE TENDER FEELINGS OF MANKIND*

That it is the duty of mankind to be tender-hearted, feeling for the distress of others, and to do all in its power to prevent and alleviate their misery, is evident not only from the example of the Son of God but the precepts of the gospel.

When the Savior of sinners visited this dark and cruel world, he became a man of sorrow and was acquainted with grief, so that he was touched with the feeling of our infirmities. He went about continually healing the sick, opening the eyes of the blind, unstopping the ears of the deaf, and raising the dead, as well as preaching the gospel of peace to the poor. He visited the houses of affliction and poured the balm of consolation into the wounded heart. He mourned with those who mourned, and wept with those who wept. Love to God and man flowed from his soul pure as the river of life, refreshing the thirsty desert around him. He was not only affectionate to his friends, but also kind to his enemies. He returned love for their hatred, and blessing for their cursing. When he was surrounded by all the powers of darkness and resigned himself into the hands of sinners to expiate their guilt, and they smote him on the cheek and plucked off the hair, he “was dumb and opened not his mouth.” While suffering all the contempt and torture which men and devils could invent, instead of returning evil for evil he prayed for his murderers and apologized for his persecutors, saying, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”

The apostle exhorts Christians, saying, “Be ye kind and tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.”

Authority in abundance might be quoted to show that the spirit of the gospel absolutely requires the exercise of love, pity, and forgiveness, even to enemies.

But who will undertake to prove that soldiers are usually kind and tender-hearted, and that their employment has a natural tendency to promote active benevolence, while it requires all their study of mind and strength of body to injure their enemies to the greatest extent?

Though we often hear of the generosity and attention of soldiers to prisoners, and notwithstanding I am willing to allow that feelings of humanity are not altogether obliterated from every soldier, yet much of this apparent kindness may flow from a desire of better treatment themselves should circumstances be reversed, or from a hope of the applause of mankind. My object, however, is not to prove that all soldiers are destitute of humanity, but that their occupation has a natural tendency and actually does weaken their kind and tender feelings, and harden their hearts.

Is it not a fact that those who are engaged in the spirit of war, either in the council or in the field, are not usually so meek, lowly, kind, and tender-hearted as other men? Does the soldier usually become kind and tender-hearted while trained to the art of killing his fellow-man, or more so when engaged in the heat of the battle, stepping forward over the wounded and hearing the groans of the expiring? Does he actually put on a heart of tenderness, mercy, and forgiveness, while he bathes his sword in the blood of his brother? Do these scenes generally change the lion into the lamb? On the contrary, don’t the history of ages and the voice of millions bear testimony that the whole trade of war has a natural tendency to blunt the tender edge of mercy and chill all the sympathizing feelings of the human heart? Who that is a parent, having an uncommonly hard-hearted and unfeeling son, would send him into the camp to subdue his inhumanity and to stamp upon him kind and tender feelings? If war does not have a

natural tendency to harden the heart, permit me to inquire why mankind does not usually feel as much at the distress occasioned by war as by other calamities?

It would be truly astonishing, were it not so common, to see with what composure most of mankind hears the account of barbarous and destructive battles. They may have some little excitement when they hear of savages – whose religion teaches them revenge – using the tomahawk and scalping knife; but when thousands are torn to pieces with shot and shells and butchered with polished steels, then it becomes a very polite and civil business, and those who perish are contemplated as only reclining on a bed of honor. If an individual in common life breaks a bone or fractures a limb, all around him not only sympathize but are ready to aid in alleviating his distress; but when thousands are slain and ten thousand wounded in the field of battle, the shock is but trifling, and the feelings are soon lost in admiring the gallantry of this hero and the prowess of that veteran. And why is there all this sensibility at the pains of an individual, and all this indifference at the sufferings of thousands, if war does not have a natural tendency to harden the heart and destroy the tender feelings of mankind?

It is a fact, however, so notorious, that the spirit and practice of war do actually harden the heart and chill the kind and tender feelings of mankind, that I think few will be found to deny it, and none will deny it who have ever known or felt the spirit of Christ.

The spirit of war must be very unlike the spirit of the gospel, for the gospel enforces no duty the practice of which has a natural tendency to harden men's hearts, but in proportion as they are influenced by its spirit and actuated by its principles they will be humane; therefore, if war hardens men's hearts it is not a Christian duty, and of course it cannot be right for Christians to engage in it.

## *2. WAR IS INHUMAN, AS IN ITS NATURE AND TENDENCY IT ABUSES GOD'S ANIMAL CREATION*

When God at first created man, he gave him authority over the beasts of the field, the fowls of the air, and the fishes of the deep. After he had swept away the old ungodly world of mankind for its violence with all the animal creation, except those in the ark, he was pleased to renew to Noah the same privilege of being lord over the animal world.

It may not perhaps be improper here to digress a little and remark that this appears to have been the original bounds of man's authority – that of having dominion only over the animal world and not over his fellow-man. It appears that God reserved to himself the government of man, whom he originally created in his own image; from which it may be inferred that man has no lawful authority for governing his fellow-man, except as the special executor of divine command, and that no government can be morally right except that which acknowledges and looks up to God as the supreme head and governor.

But to return: although the animal world is put under the dominion of man for his use, yet he has no authority to exercise cruelty towards it. "For the merciful man regardeth the life of his beast." God is very merciful to his creatures; he not only hears the young ravens when they cry but he opens his hand and supplies the wants of the cattle upon a thousand hills.

Though God has decorated the earth with beauty and richly clothed it with food for man and beast, yet where an all-devouring army passes, notwithstanding the earth before them is like the garden of Eden, it is behind them a desolate wilderness; the lowing ox and bleating sheep may cry for food, but, alas! "The destroyer hath destroyed it."

The noble horse, which God has made for the use and pleasure of man, shares largely in this desolating evil. He is often taken, without his customary food, to run with an express, until, exhausted by fatigue, he falls lifeless beneath his rider. Multitudes of them are chained to the harness with scanty food, and goaded forward to drag the baggage of an army and the thundering engines of death, until their



strength has failed, their breath exhausted, and the kindness they then receive is the lash of the whip or the point of a spear. In such scenes the comfort of beasts is not thought of, except by a selfish owner who fears the loss of his property.

But all this is trifling compared with what these noble animals, which tamely bow to the yoke of man, suffer in the charge of the battle; the horse rushes into the combat not knowing that torture and death are before him. His sides are often perforated with the spur of his rider, notwithstanding he exerts all his strength to rush into the heat of the battle, while the strokes of the sabers and the wounds of the bullets lacerate his body, and instead of having God's pure air to breathe to alleviate his pains, he can only snuff up the dust of his feet and the sulphurous smoke of the cannon, emblem of the infernal abode. Thus he has no ease for his pains unless God commissions the bayonet or the bullet to take away his life.

But if such is the cruelty to beasts in prosecuting war, what is the cruelty to man, born for immortality? It is no wonder that those who feel so little for their fellow men should feel less for beasts. If war is an inhuman and cruel employment, it must be wrong for Christians to engage in it.

### *3. WAR IS INHUMAN, AS IT OPPRESSES THE POOR*

To oppress the poor is everywhere in the Scriptures considered as a great sin. "For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord." "Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself and not be heard." "What mean ye that ye beat my people to pieces, and grind the faces of the poor?" saith the Lord God of hosts."

The threats against those who oppress the poor, and the blessings pronounced upon those who plead their cause, are very numerous in the Scriptures. The threats are so tremendous and awful that all men ought to consider well before they are active in any step that has a natural tendency to oppress the poor and needy.

That war actually does oppress the poor may be heard from ten thousand wretched tongues that have felt its woe. Very few, comparatively, who are instigators of war actually take the field of battle, and are seldom seen in the front of the fire. It is usually those who are rioting on the labors of the poor that fan up the flame of war. The great majority of soldiers are generally from the poor of a country. They must gird on the harness and for a few cents per day endure all the hardships of a camp and be led forward like sheep to the slaughter. Though multitudes are bewitched to enlist by the intoxicating cup, the glitter of arms, the vainglory of heroes, and the empty sound of patriotism, yet many more are called away contrary to their wishes by the iron hand of despotic laws. Perhaps a parent is enrolled whose daily labor was hardly sufficient to supply a scanty pittance for numerous offspring, who are in his absence crying for bread. And why is there all this sorrow in this poor and needy family? Because the husband and father is gone, and probably gone forever, most likely to gratify the wishes of some ambitious men who care as little as they think of his anxious family. Perhaps an only son is taken from old, decrepit parents, the only earthly prop of their declining years; and with cold poverty and sorrow their gray hairs are brought down to the dust.

War cannot be prosecuted without enormous expenses. The money that has been expended the last twenty years in war would doubtless have been sufficient not only to have rendered every poor person on earth comfortable – so far as money could do it – during the same period, but, if the residue had been applied to cultivate the earth, it would have literally turned the desert into a fruitful field. Only the interest of the money that has been expended in a few years by the European nations in prosecuting war would have been sufficient, under proper direction, to educate every poor child on earth in the common rudiments of learning, and to support missionaries in abundance to convey the gospel of peace to every creature. What a noble employment, if those nations had exerted their powers for these objects as much

as they have for injuring each other! And what a difference would have appeared in the world! Blessings would have fallen on millions ready to perish, instead of desolation, terror, and death.

The vast expenses of war must be met by corresponding taxes, whether by duties on merchandise or direct taxes on real estate; yet they fall most heavily on the poor. Whatever duty the merchant pays to the customhouse, he adds the amount to the price of his goods, so that the consumer actually pays the tax. If a tax is levied on real estate, the product of that estate is raised to meet it, and whoever consumes the product pays the tax. In times of war, the prices of the necessaries of life are generally very much increased, but the prices of the labor of the poor do not usually rise in the same proportion, therefore it falls very heavily on them. When the honest laborers are suddenly called from the plow to take the sword and leave the tilling of the ground, either its seed is but sparingly sown or its fruit but partially gathered, scarcity ensues, high prices are the consequence, and the difficulty greatly increased for the poor to obtain the necessaries of life, especially if they were dependent on the product of a scanty farm which they are now deprived of cultivating. Many a poor widow, who has been able in times of peace to support her fatherless children, has been obliged in times of war in a great measure to depend on the cold hand of charity to supply their wants.

The calamities of war necessarily fall more on the poor than on the rich, because the poor of a country are generally a large majority of its inhabitants.

These are some of the evils of war at a distance, but when it comes to their doors, if they are favored personally to escape the ferocity of the soldiers, they fly from their habitations, leaving their little all to the fire and pillage, glad to escape with their lives, though destitute and dependent; and when they cast round their eyes for relief, they only meet a fellow-sufferer, who can sympathize with them but not supply their wants. Thus does war not only oppress the poor, but it also adds multitudes to their number who before were comfortable.

If war actually does oppress the poor, then we may infer that in its nature and tendency it is very unlike the genius of the gospel, and not right for Christians to engage in it.

#### *4. WAR IS INHUMAN, AS IT SPREADS TERROR AND DISTRESS AMONG MANKIND*

In the benign reign of the Messiah, the earth will be filled with the abundance of peace; there will be nothing to hurt or destroy; everyone will sit quietly under his own vine and fig tree, having nothing to molest him or make him afraid. But in times of war, mankind is usually full of anxiety; people's hearts failing them for fear, looking for those things that are coming upon our wicked world.

One of the most delightful scenes on earth is a happy family in which all the members dwell together in love, being influenced by the blessed precepts of the gospel of peace. But how soon does the sound of war disturb and distress the happy circle! If it is only the distant thunder of the cannon that salutes the ear, the mother starts from her repose, and all the children gather round her with looks full of anxiety to know the cause. Few women can so command their feelings as to hide the cause; and let it be said to the honor of the female sex that they have generally tender feelings, which cannot easily be disguised at the distress of their fellow-beings. Perhaps a mother's heart is wrung with anguish in the prospect that either the partner of her life or the sons of her care and sorrow, or both, are about to be called into the bloody field of battle. Perhaps the decrepit parent views his darling son leaving his peaceful abode to enter the ensanguined field, never more to return. How soon are these joyful little circles turned into mourning and sorrow!

Who can describe the distress of a happy village suddenly encompassed by two contending armies – perhaps so early and suddenly that its inhabitants are aroused from their peaceful slumbers by the

confused noise of the warriors, more ferocious than the beasts that prowl in the forest? Were it not for the tumult of the battle, shrieks of distress from innocent women and children might be heard from almost every abode. Children run to the arms of their distracted mothers, who are as unable to find a refuge for themselves as for their offspring. If they fly to the streets they are in the midst of death: hundreds of cannon are vomiting destruction in every quarter; the hoofs of horses trampling down everything in their way; bullets, stones, bricks, and splinters flying in every direction; houses pierced with cannon shot and shells which carry desolation in their course; outside, multitudes of men rushing with deadly weapons upon each other with all the rage of tigers, plunging each other into eternity, until the streets are literally drenched with the blood of men. To increase the distress, the village is taken and retaken several times at the point of the bayonet. If the inhabitants fly to their cellars to escape the fury of the storm, their buildings may soon be wrapped in flames over their heads.

And for what, it may be asked, is all this inhuman sacrifice made? Probably to gain the empty bubble called honor – a standard of right and wrong without form or dimensions. Let no one say that the writer's imagination is heated while it is not in the power of his feeble pen to half describe the horror and distress of the scenes, which are by no means uncommon in a state of war.

If such are some of the effects of war, then it must be a very inhuman employment, and wrong for Christians to engage in it.

### *5. WAR IS INHUMAN, AS IT INVOLVES MEN IN FATIGUE, FAMINE, AND ALL THE PAINS OF MUTILATED BODIES*

To describe the fatigues and hardships of a soldier's life would require the experience of a soldier, so that only some of their common sufferings can be touched upon by a person who is a stranger to the miseries of a camp.

A great majority of those who enter the ranks of an army are persons unaccustomed to great privations and severe fatigues; hence the great proportion of mortality among fresh recruits. Their habits and strength are unable to endure the hard fare, and the rapid and constant marches generally imposed upon them in active service.

The young soldier commonly exchanges a wholesome table, a comfortable dwelling, and an easy bed for bad food, the field for his house, the cold earth for his bed, and the heavens over him for his covering. He must stand at his post day and night, summer and winter; face the scorching sun, the chilling tempest, and be exposed to all the storms of the season, without any comfortable repose; perhaps during most of the time with a scanty allowance of the coarsest food, and often destitute of any, except the miserable supply he may have chance to plunder – not enough to satisfy, but only to keep alive the craving demands of nature; often compelled to march and countermarch several days and nights in succession, without a moment to prepare his provisions to nourish him and glad to get a little raw to sustain his life. Frequently, this hardship is endured in the cold and inclement season, while his tattered clothing is only the remains of his summer dress. Barefooted and half naked, fatigued and chilled, he becomes a prey to disease, and is often left to perish without a human being to administer to him the least comfort. If he is carried to a hospital, he is there surrounded by the pestilential breath of hundreds of his poor fellow-sufferers, where the best comforts that can be afforded are but scanty and dismal.

But all this is comparatively trifling to the sufferings of the wounded on the field of battle. There, thousands of mangled bodies lie on the cold ground hours, and sometimes days, without a friendly hand to bind up a wound; not a voice is heard except the dying groans of their fellow-sufferers around them. No one can describe the horrors of the scene: here lies one with a fractured skull, there another with a

severed limb, and a third with a lacerated body; some fainting with the loss of blood, others distracted, and others again crying for help.

If such are some of the faint outlines of the fatigues and sufferings of soldiers, then their occupation must be an inhuman employment, for they are instrumental in bringing the same calamities on others which they suffer themselves; and of course it is unfriendly to the spirit of the gospel, and wrong for Christians to engage in it.

## *6. WAR IS INHUMAN, AS IT DESTROYS THE YOUTH AND CUTS OFF THE HOPE OF THE AGED*

All of mankind are speedily hastening into eternity, and it might be supposed sufficiently fast without the aid of all the ingenuity and strength of man to hurry them forward; yet it is a melancholy truth that a great proportion of the wealth, talents, and labors of men are actually employed in inventing and using means for the premature destruction of their fellow-beings.

One generation passes away, and another follows in quick succession. The young are always the stay and hope of the aged; parents labor and toil for their children to supply their wants and to educate them to be happy, respectable, and useful, and then depend upon them to be their stay and comfort in their declining years. Alas, how many expectations of fond parents are blasted! Their sons are taken away from them and hurried into the field of slaughter.

In times of war the youth – the flower, strength, and beauty of the country – are called from their sober, honest, and useful employments to the field of battle; and if they do not lose their lives or limbs, they generally lose their habits of morality and industry. Alas! Few ever return again to the bosom of their friends. Though from their mistaken and fascinating views of a soldier's life and honor they may be delighted in enlisting, and merry in their departure from their peaceful homes, yet their joy is soon turned into pain and sorrow. Unthinking youth, like the horse, rushes thoughtlessly into the battle. Repentance is then too late; to shrink back is death, and to go forward is only a faint hope of life. Here on the dreadful field are thousands and hundreds of thousands driven together to slaughter each other by a few ambitious men, perhaps none of whom are present. A large number are probably the youth of their country, the delight and comfort of their parents. All these opposing numbers are most likely persons who never knew or heard of each other, having no personal ill-will, most of whom would in any other circumstances not only not injure each other but be ready to aid in any kind office; yet by the act of war they are ranged against each other in all the hellish rage of revenge and slaughter.

No pen, much less that of the writer, can describe the inhumanity and horrors of a battle. All is confusion and dismay, dust and smoke arising, horses running, trumpets blasting, cannon roaring, bullets whistling, and the shrieks of the wounded and dying vibrating from every quarter. Column after column of men charge upon each other in furious onset, with the awful crash of bayonets and sabers, with eyes flashing and visages frightfully distorted with rage, rushing upon each other with the violence of brutish monsters; and when these are literally cut to pieces others march in quick succession, only to share the same cruel and bloody tragedy. Hundreds are parrying the blows; hundreds more are thrusting their bayonets into the bowels of their fellow-mortals, and many, while extricating them, have their own heads cleft asunder by swords and sabers; and all are hurried together before the tribunal of their Judge, with hearts full of rage and hands dyed in the blood of their brethren.

O horrid and debasing scene! My heart melts at the contemplation, and I forbear to dwell upon the inhuman employment.

## *7. WAR IS INHUMAN, AS IT MULTIPLIES WIDOWS AND ORPHANS, AND CLOTHES THE LAND IN MOURNING*

The widow and fatherless are special objects of divine compassion, and Christianity binds men under the strongest obligation to be kind and merciful towards them, as their situation is peculiarly tender and afflicting.

“A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widow, is God in his holy habitation.” “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction.”

To be active in any measure that has a natural tendency to wantonly multiply widows and orphans in a land is the height of inhumanity as well as daring impiety.

I will venture to say that no one circumstance in our world has so greatly multiplied widows and fatherless children as that of war. What has humanity ever gained by war to counterbalance simply the afflictions of the widow and fatherless? I verily believe nothing comparatively. I am well aware that a very popular plea for war is to defend, as it is styled, “our firesides, our wives and children”; but this generally is only a specious address to the feelings, to rouse up a martial spirit which makes thousands of women and children wretched where one is made happy. I am sensible that those will sneer at my opinion who regard more the honor that comes from men than they do the consolation of the widow and the fatherless.

In times of war thousands of virtuous women are deprived of their husbands and ten thousands of helpless children of their fathers. The little tender children may gather round their disconsolate mothers, anxiously inquiring about their fathers, remembering their kind visages, recollecting how they used fondly to dandle them on their knees and affectionately instruct them; but now they are torn from their embraces by the cruelty of war, and they have no fathers left them but their Father in heaven.

It is probably no exaggeration to suppose that in Europe there are now two hundred thousand widows and a million fatherless children occasioned by war. What a mass of affliction! Humanity bleeds at the thought! These children must now roam about without a father to provide for, protect, or instruct them. They now become an easy prey to all kinds of vice; many probably will be trained up for ignominious death, and most of them fit only for a soldier’s life, to slaughter and to be slaughtered, unless some humane hand kindly takes them under its protection.

And here I cannot help admiring the spirit of Christianity. It is owing to the blessed spirit and temper of the gospel of peace that many of the evils of war are so much ameliorated at the present day as well as the inhuman slavery of men.

The numerous asylums that now exist for the relief of the needy, the widow, and the fatherless are some of the precious fruits of Christianity; and if this spirit were universal, the bow would soon be broken to pieces, the spear cut asunder, and the chariots of war burnt with fire, and wars would cease to the ends of the earth.

And is it not the duty of all who name the name of Christ to do all in their power to counteract this destroying evil?

War not only multiplies widows and orphans but also clothes the land in mourning. In times of war multitudes of people are clothed with ensigns of mourning. Here are gray-headed parents shrouded in blackness, weeping for the loss of darling sons; there are widows covered with veils mourning the loss of husbands, and refusing to be comforted; children crying because their fathers are no more. Cities and villages are covered in darkness and desolation; weeping and mourning arise from almost every abode.

And it may be asked: what inhuman hand is the cause of all this sorrow? Perhaps some rash man, in the impetuosity of his spirit, has taken some unjust, high ground, and is too proud to retrace a step, and would rather see millions wretched than to nobly confess that he had been in the wrong.

Surely Christians cannot be active in such measures without incurring the displeasure of God, who styles himself the father of the fatherless and the judge and avenger of the widow.

Thus I have shown that war is inhuman and therefore wholly inconsistent with Christianity, by proving that it tends to destroy humane dispositions; that it hardens the hearts and blunts the tender feelings of men; that it involves the abuse of God's animal creation; that it oppresses the poor; that it spreads terror and distress among mankind; that it subjects soldiers to cruel privations and sufferings; that it destroys the youth and cuts off the hope of the aged; and that it multiplies widows and orphans and occasions mourning and sorrow.

The fact that war is inhuman is indeed one of those obvious truths that it is difficult to render plainer by argument; those who know in what war consists cannot help knowing that it is inhuman.

What Mr. Windham said with reference to the inhumanity of slavery may be said of the inhumanity of war. In one of his speeches in the House of Commons against the slave trade, he stated his difficulty in arguing against such a trade to be of that kind which is felt in arguing in favor of a self-evident proposition. "If it were denied that two and two made four, it would not be a very easy task," he said, "to find arguments to support the affirmative side of the question. Precisely similar was his embarrassment in having to prove that the slave trade was unjust and inhuman."

Whoever admits that the slave trade is inhuman must admit that war is inhuman in a greater variety of ways and on a much larger scale.

The inhumanity of the slave trade was the great and, finally, triumphant argument by which it was proved to be inconsistent with Christianity.

The advocates of slavery, like the advocates of war, resorted to the Old Testament for support; but it appeared that slavery, as it also appears that war, was permitted and approved of for reasons and on principles peculiar to the ancient economy. This is apparent as well from the difference between the general design of the old and new dispensations as from the whole genius and spirit of the gospel. Hence, those who opposed the slave trade argued from the general nature and spirit of Christianity as the strongest ground that could be taken. *If* slavery is inconsistent with this, it ought not to be tolerated; but slavery *is* inhuman and *is* therefore inconsistent with Christianity. Exactly the same is true of war, and nothing short of an express revelation from God, commanding war or slavery, can render either of them justifiable.

It deserves to be distinctly considered that the gospel contains little or nothing directly by way of precept against slavery; but slavery is inconsistent with its general requirements and inculcations, and is therefore wrong. But war, besides being inconsistent with the genius and spirit of the gospel, is prohibited by those precepts which forbid retaliation and revenge, and those which require forgiveness and good will.

It is plain, then, that he who does not advocate and defend the slave trade, to be consistent, must grant that war is incompatible with Christianity, and that it is a violation of the gospel to countenance it.

## WAR IS UNWISE

That the principles and practice of war are unwise I argue:

### *1. BECAUSE, INSTEAD OF PREVENTING, THEY PROVOKE INSULT AND MISCHIEF*

The maxim, that in order to preserve peace, mankind must be prepared for war, has become so common, and sanctioned by such high authority, that few question its wisdom or policy; but if stripped of its specious garb, it may appear to proceed not from that wisdom which came down from above, which is “first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy”; and if it is not the wisdom from above, then it must be the wisdom from beneath.

Are not pride, avarice, and revenge the seeds of all kinds of carnal warfare? From these grow all the quarreling among children, the discord among families, the bickering, law suits, and broils among neighbors, the boxing among bullies, the dueling among modern gentlemen, and wars among nations. They all originate from one and the same spirit.

Is the mild, meek, and peaceable man, unarmed, more liable to inspire jealousy in others that he is about to insult and abuse them than the high-toned duelist who constantly carries with him deadly weapons? Does he, in fact, so often get into difficulty, quarreling and fighting? The respectable Society of Friends stands a living monument to answer the question.

On the principles of self-defense, as they are styled, if one man suspects an injury from another, unless he is naturally a more powerful man, he must take a cane, as the principles of self-defense require a superior power in your own hand, either by art or muscular strength. When the other learns the suspicions and sees the preparation, he in his turn must take a bludgeon to preserve the balance of power and proclaim a threatening to awe his antagonist, who must now take a sword and return a threatening in order to maintain his dignity; for it will not do for men of honor to retract, however much they may be in the wrong. The other, again, must take a deadly weapon for his defense, and nothing is now wanting but an unhappy meeting to set each other’s blood a flowing.

Much in the same way, nations often get into desperate warfare. One nation is busily increasing its military strength on the plausible maxim of preserving peace and maintaining its rights. Another nation views the preparations with a jealous eye, and also goes to work on the same principle to make formidable preparations. All the nations around take the alarm, and on the same principle begin active preparations, all vying with each other to become the most formidable. If one sends an ambassador to inquire into the cause of the great preparations, the answer always is, let the motive be what it may, *for their own defense*. Then the other makes new exertions and begins to fortify towns on the confines of his neighbor, who must not only do the same, but also march a large army for the defense of his frontier; and the other must do likewise. By this time, if no old quarrel remained unsettled, perhaps one charges the other with encroachment on territory; the other denies the charge, and contends sharply for his pretended rights. Ministers may be interchanged, and while negotiations are pending a high tone must be taken by both parties, for this is an essential principle in the doctrine of self-defense; the contrary would betray weakness and fear. Newspapers must be ushered forth with flaming pieces to rouse, as it is called, the spirit of the countries, so as to impress upon the populace the idea that the approaching war is just and necessary, for all wars must be just and necessary on both sides. In the meantime

extraordinary envoys may be sent to other powers by each party to enlist their aid – most of whom are already prepared for war – and each one selects his side according to his interests and feelings. At length the *ultimatum* is given and refused, and the dreadful conflict commences. Few wars, however, begin in this slow and progressive mode; a trifling aggression is sufficient to blow up the flame with nations already prepared.

Thus, we see, nations resemble bulldogs that happen to meet. They will first raise their hairs, show their teeth, then growl, and then seize upon each other with all their strength and fury; and bulldogs have something of the same kind of honor, for they scorn to retreat.

Hence we see that the acknowledged principles of defensive war are the vital springs of most of the wars that agitate and desolate our world. The pretended distinction between offensive and defensive war is but a name. All parties engaged in war proclaim to the world that they only are fighting in defense of their rights, and that their enemies are the aggressors; while it may be impossible for man to decide which are most in the wrong.

The popular maxim of being prepared for war in order to be at peace may be seen to be erroneous in fact, for the history of nations abundantly shows that few nations ever made great preparations for war and remained long in peace. When nations prepare for war they actually go to war, and tell the world that their preparations were not a mere show.

Thus we may see that the principles and preparations of war actually engender war instead of promoting peace; and of course they are unwise, and, if unwise, then it is folly for Christians to engage in them.

## *2. WAR IS UNWISE, FOR INSTEAD OF DIMINISHING, IT INCREASES DIFFICULTIES*

As the principles and preparations of war have a natural tendency to generate war and are actually the cause of a great proportion of the wars that do exist, so actual hostilities have a natural tendency to increase difficulties and to spread abroad the destroying evil.

It is almost impossible for any two nations to be long engaged in war without interfering with the rights and privileges of other nations, which generally awakes their jealousy and resentment, so that most of the surrounding nations are drawn into the destructive vortex. This is the more easily done, as war inflames the martial spirit in other nations not engaged, and rouses up the desperate passions of men. Besides, the belligerent nations are not content with suffering themselves, but use every art and persuasion to get the neighboring nations to join them; and they are generally too successful, for it seldom happens that two nations engage in war for a length of time and conclude a peace before they have involved other nations in their difficulties and distresses, and often a great proportion of the world is in arms.

Moreover, the nations who first engage in the contest always widen the breach between themselves by war.

It is much easier settling difficulties between individuals or nations before actual hostilities commence than afterwards. Mankind is not apt to be any more mild and accommodating in a state of actual warfare. Besides, new difficulties constantly arise. The passions become inflamed, and charges are often made of violating the established laws of civilized warfare, which laws, however, are generally bounded only by the strength of power. If one party makes an incursion into the other's territory, storms a fortified place, and burns the town, the other party must then make a desperate effort to retaliate the same kind of destruction, to a double degree, on the towns of their enemy. Retaliation, or "rendering evil for evil," is not only allowed by Muslims and pagans, but is an open and avowed principle in the



doctrine of self-defense among professed Christian nations. Not only is it sanctioned by the laity, but also too often by the priests who minister in the name of Jesus Christ.

Both of the contending parties generally seize on each other's possessions wherever they can get hold of them, whether on the seas or on the land. The barbarous spoliations on each other stir up the passions of the great mass of their inhabitants, until they esteem it a virtue to view each other as natural and perpetual enemies, and then their rulers can prosecute the war with what they call vigor.

Can the wound now be so easily healed as it could have been before it became thus lacerated and inflamed? Facts speak to the contrary, and nations seldom attempt negotiations for peace under such circumstances. They generally prosecute the war with all their power until one party or the other is overcome, or until both have exhausted their strength, and then they may mutually agree to a temporary peace to gain a little respite, when perhaps the original matter of dispute has become comparatively so trifling that it is almost left out of the account.

With a small spirit of forbearance and accommodation how easily might the difficulties have been settled before such an immense loss of blood and treasure!

If war does actually increase, instead of diminishing, difficulties, then it must be very unwise to engage in it.

### *3. WAR IS UNWISE, BECAUSE IT DESTROYS PROPERTY*

Property is what a great proportion of mankind is struggling to obtain, and many at the hazard of their lives. Though in some instances they may misuse it, yet it is the gift of God, and when made subservient to more important things, it may be a blessing to individuals and communities. It has in it, therefore, a real value, and ought not to be wantonly destroyed while it may be used as an instrument for benefiting mankind.

It is a notorious fact that war does make a great destruction of property. Thousands of individuals on sea and on land lose their all, for the acquisition of which they may have spent the prime of their lives. Ships on the high seas are taken, often burnt or scuttled, and valuable cargoes sent to the bottom of the deep, some possibly laden with the necessaries of life and bound to ports where the innocent inhabitants were in a state of famine. Whole countries are laid waste by only the passing of an immense army: houses are defaced, furniture broken to pieces, the stores of families eaten up, cornfields trodden down, fences torn away and used for fuel, and everything swept in its train as with the besom of destruction more terrible to the inhabitants than the storms of heaven when sent in judgment. Beautiful towns are often literally torn to pieces with shot and shells. Venerable cities, the labor and pride of ages, are buried in ashes amid devouring flames, while in melancholy grandeur the fire and smoke rise to heaven and seem to cry for vengeance on the destroyers.

Notwithstanding an avaricious individual or nation may occasionally in war acquire by plunder from their brethren a little wealth, yet they usually lose, on the whole, more than they gain. On the general scale the loss is incalculable. It is not my object to examine the subject in relation to any particular nation or war, but upon the general scale in application to all warlike nations and all wars under the light of the gospel.

If war does destroy property, reduce individuals to beggary, and impoverish nations, then it is unwise to engage in it.

#### 4. WAR IS UNWISE, AS IT IS DANGEROUS TO THE LIBERTIES OF MEN

Liberty is the gift of God, and ought to be dear to every man – but not, however, that licentious liberty which is not in subordination to his commands. Men are not independent of God. He is their creator, preserver, and benefactor. Their breath is in his hand, and he has a right to do what he will with his own; and the Judge of all the earth will do right. As man is not the creator and proprietor of man, he has no right to infringe on his liberty or life without God’s express divine command; and then he acts only as the executor of God. Man, therefore, bears a very different relation to God from what he does to his fellow man.

The whole system of war is tyrannical and subversive of the fundamental principles of liberty. It often brings the great mass of community under the severe bondage of military despotism, so that their lives and fortunes are at the sport of a tyrant. Where martial law is proclaimed, liberty is cast down, and despotism raises her horrid ensign in its place and fills the dungeons and scaffolds with her victims.

Soldiers in actual service are reduced to the most abject slavery, not able to command their time for a moment, and are constantly driven about like beasts by petty tyrants. In them is exhibited the ridiculous absurdity of men rushing into bondage and destruction to preserve or acquire their liberty and save their lives.

When the inhabitants of a country are cruelly oppressed by a despotic government, and they rise in mass to throw off the yoke, they are as often as otherwise crushed beneath the weight of the power under which they groaned, and then their sufferings are greatly increased; and if they gain their object after a long and sanguinary struggle, they actually suffer more on the whole than they would have suffered had they remained in peace. It is generally the providence of God, too, to make a people who have thrown off the yoke of their oppressor smart more severely under the government of their own choice than they did under the government that they destroyed. This fact ought well to be considered by everyone of a revolutionary spirit.

War actually generates a spirit of anarchy and rebellion that is destructive to liberty. When the inhabitants of a country are engaged in the peaceable employments of agriculture, manufacture, and commerce, anarchy and rebellion seldom happen. When these useful employments flourish, abundance flows in on every side, gentleness and humanity cast a smile over the land, and pleasure beams in almost every countenance. To turn the attention of a nation from these honest employments to *that of war* is an evil of unspeakable magnitude. The great object in times of war is to rouse up what is styled the spirit of the country – which, in fact, is nothing but inflaming the most destructive passions against its own peace and safety. If you infuse into a nation the spirit of war for the sake of fighting a foreign enemy, you do that which is often most dangerous to its own liberties; for if you make peace with the common enemy, you do not destroy the spirit of war among your own inhabitants. Pride, discontent, and revenge will generally agitate the whole body, so that anarchy and confusion will fill the land, and nothing but a despotic power can restrain it. Absolute despotism is often too feeble to withstand it, and the only remedy is again to seek a common enemy. Nations have sometimes waged war against other nations because there was such a spirit of war among their own inhabitants that they could not be restrained from fighting,<sup>2</sup> and if they had not a common foe they would fight one another. So when a nation once unsheathes the sword, it cannot easily return the sword again to the scabbard, but must keep it crimsoned with the blood of man until “they who take the sword shall perish with the sword,” agreeably to the denunciation of Heaven.

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<sup>2</sup> Transcriber’s note – This is just the point made by Amos Dresser in his book *The Bible Against War* – that God allowed war in the Old Testament only because the Hebrews could not conceive of anything else.

To inflame a mild republic with the *spirit of war* is putting all its liberties to the utmost hazard, and is an evil that few appear to understand or appreciate. No person can calculate the greatness of the evil of transforming the citizens of a peaceful, industrious republic into a band of furious soldiers; and yet the unhappy policy of nations is to cultivate a martial spirit so that they may appear grand, powerful, and terrific, when in fact they are kindling flames that will eventually burn them up root and branch.

In confirmation of what has been said, if we examine the history of nations we shall find that they have generally lost their liberties in consequence of the spirit and practice of war. Thus have republics who have boasted of their freedom lost their liberty one after another, and that this has resulted from the very nature of war and its inseparable evils is evident from the fact that so violent and deadly is this current of ruin, republics have generally sunk down to the lowest abyss of tyranny and despotism, or have been annihilated and their inhabitants scattered to the four winds of heaven. Indeed, what nation that has become extinct did not first lose its liberty by war, and then hasten to its end under the dominion of those passions which war inflames?

Do nations ever enjoy so much liberty as when most free from the spirit of war? Are their liberties ever so little endangered as when this spirit is allayed and all its foreign excitements removed? Do not nations that have partially lost their civil liberties gradually regain them in proportion as they continue long without war? Is it not a common sentiment that the liberties of a people are in danger when war engrosses their attention? On the whole, is it not undeniable that peace is favorable to liberty, and that war is its enemy and its ruin? If so, what can be more unwise, what more opposite to every dictate of sound wisdom and policy, than the spirit and practice of war?

## 5. WAR IS UNWISE, AS IT DIMINISHES THE HAPPINESS OF MANKIND

Happiness is the professed object that most men are striving to obtain. Alas! Few, comparatively, seek it where it is alone to be found. But that happiness which flows from the benevolent spirit of the gospel is to be prized far above rubies. It is a treasure infinitely surpassing anything that can be found merely in riches, honors, and pleasures.

But war always diminishes the aggregate of happiness in the world. When nations wage war upon each other, all classes of their inhabitants are more or less oppressed. They are subjected to various privations: prosperity declines, and external sources of happiness are mostly dried up. Anxiety for friends, loss of relations, loss of property, the fear of pillage, severe services, great privations, and the dread of conquest keep them constantly distressed. They are like the troubled sea that cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.

Those actually engaged in war generally suffer privations and hardships of the severest kind. Even the sage counselors who declare wars are often in so great anxiety and pain as to the result of their enterprises as to be unable quietly to refresh themselves with food or sleep.

All the rejoicings occasioned by military success are fully counterbalanced by the pain and mortification of the vanquished and, in short, all the interest and happiness resulting from war to individuals and nations are dearly bought, and are at the expense of other individuals and nations.

It is because war has no tendency to increase, but does in fact greatly diminish, happiness that it is so universally regarded and lamented as the greatest evil that visits our world. Hence fasting has generally been practiced by warlike Christian nations to deplore the calamity, to humble themselves before God, and to supplicate his mercy in turning away the judgment.

Though fasting and deep humility before God are highly suitable for sinners, with a hearty turning away from their sins and humble supplication for God's mercy through the mediation of Christ, yet

those fasts of nations, who have voluntarily engaged in wars and are determined to prosecute them until their lusts and passions are gratified, do not appear to be such fasts as God requires.

Does it not appear absurd for nations voluntarily to engage in war, and then to proclaim a fast to humble themselves before God for its evils, while they have no desire to turn away from those evils, but, on the contrary, make it an express object to seek the divine aid in assisting them successfully to perpetuate the very evils for which they are fasting?

We often see contending nations, all of whom cannot be right on any principle, proclaiming fasts, and chanting forth their solemn *Te Deums*, as each may occasionally be victorious. Though such clashing hymns cannot mingle in the golden censer, yet few Christians seem to question the propriety of quarreling and fighting nations each in their turn supplicating aid in their unhallowed undertakings and returning thanks in case of success. Doubtless many would consider it as solemn mockery to see two duelists before their meeting, supplicating God's blessing and protection in the hour of conflict, and then to see the victor returning thanks for his success in shedding the blood of his brother; and yet, when nations carry on the business by wholesale (if I may be allowed the expression) it is considered a very pious employment. The Lord has said, "And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you. Yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear, for your hands are full of blood."

Penitent Christians may weep and mourn with propriety for their own sins and the sins of the nations, with a hearty desire not only to forsake their own iniquities, but that the nations may be brought to confess and forsake their sins and turn from them to the living God. It is true that war is a judgment in God's providence. It is also a sin of the highest magnitude and ought to be repented of. It is a crime so provoking to Heaven that other calamities generally attend it. The famine, fire, and pestilence often attend its horrors and spread distress through a land. War, with its attending evils, unquestionably diminishes the aggregate of happiness in the world, and is therefore unwise.

## 6. WAR IS UNWISE, AS IT DOES NOT MEND, BUT INJURES, THE MORALS OF SOCIETY

The strength, defense, and glory of a country consist primarily in the good moral character of its inhabitants. The virtuous and the good are the salt that preserves it from ruin. "It is manifest from the whole tenor of his word that God is slow to inflict heavy judgments upon a nation in which many of his people dwell; that he often spares it, spreads over it the protection of his providence, and finally delivers it for their sake; and, of course, that the presence of his beloved children, speaking after the manner of men, is a better defense than chariots and horsemen, a better defense than all the plans of *mere* politicians, than all the skill, courage, and activity of *mere* warriors." Again, "I have no doubt that it is as great and precious a truth at this day as it ever was, that a praying people are, under God, the greatest security of a nation."<sup>3</sup>

When the inhabitants of a country become generally profane and dissolute in their manners, slaves to dissipation and vice, it is usually God's providence soon to visit them in his wrath and let loose the instruments of his destroying vengeance. How important, therefore, in a temporal point of view, is the preservation of good morals to a nation. But no event has so powerful a tendency to destroy the morals of a people as that of actual war. It draws the attention of the inhabitants from useful employments; it generates curiosity, dissipation, and idleness, and awakes all the furious passions of men.

War occasions a great profanation of the Sabbath. Under God's providence the Sabbath has always been a great barrier against vice, and the observance of it is indispensable to good morals.

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<sup>3</sup> The Rev. Dr. Miller, in his sermon on the death of Dr. Rogers, pages 366 and 388 of the Memoirs.

In time of war the Sabbath among soldiers is often a day of parade. In the streets of the best-regulated cities may be seen soldiers marching, flags flying, drums and fifes playing, and a rabble of children following in the train. All this is not only calculated to dissipate all reverential respect for the solemnities of the day among the soldiers, but is calculated to destroy the respect and observance of the day with which the children and youth have been inspired. Add to this, flags are suspended from the windows of taverns and grogshops to entice in the youth by the intoxicating cup. In the camp the Sabbath is almost forgotten and rendered a common day. Armies from professing Christian nations as often begin offensive operations on the Sabbath as on any other day; and professing Christians not only tolerate all this but also approve of it as a work of necessity and mercy.

War occasions dishonesty. In countries where armies are raised by voluntary enlistment, all kinds of deception and art are practiced by recruiting officers, and connived at by their governments, to induce the heedless youth to enlist. The honor and glory of the employment is held up to view in false colors; the importance of their bounty and wages are magnified; the lightness of the duty and opportunities for amusements and recreation are held out; and probably one half have the assurances of being noncommissioned officers, with a flattering prospect of a speedy advancement; and prospects of plunder are also held out to their cupidity. These deceptive motives are daily urged under the stimulating power of ardent spirits and the fascinating charms of martial music and military finery. Many a young man who has entered the rendezvous from curiosity or for the sake of a dram, without the least idea of joining the army, has been entrapped into intoxication, and his hand then grasped the pen to seal his fate.

Recruits, after joining the army, find from experience that most of the allurements held out to them to enlist were but a deception, and from lust and want they often become petty thieves and plunderers to repay them for their great privations, fatigues, and sufferings.

War occasions drunkenness – one of the greatest evils and most destructive to morality, as a multitude of other vices necessarily follow in its train. Many a young man has entered the military ranks *temperate*, and has returned from them a *sot*. All the enticements of liquor are exhibited in the most inviting forms to youth in the streets by the recruiting officer, to tempt them to enlist; and while those who have enrolled themselves remain at the rendezvous, they are probably every day intoxicated with the inebriating poison, soul and body, and soon the habit becomes confirmed. While in actual service, their fatigues are so great that they greedily lay hold on the destroying liquor wherever they can find it to exhilarate their languid frames, even if they had not before acquired an insatiable thirst; and soon this detestable evil will become so enchanting that they will not only barter away their wages for it, but their necessary clothing. If they survive the campaign and return to their homes, they are often the visitors of grogshops and taverns, and by their marvelous stories attract the populace around them, who must join them in circulating the cup; and thus they spread this destroying evil all around.

War occasions profaneness. Profaneness is an abomination in the sight of God: “For the Lord will not hold him guiltless who taketh his name in vain.” Profaneness draws down the judgments of heaven, “for because of swearing the land mourneth.”

That soldiers are generally considered more profane than other men is evident, because it has become a proverb that “such a person is as profane as a soldier, or a sailor.” Young men who have been taught to revere the name of the God of their fathers may shudder at the awful profanations that fill their ears when they first enter an army; but if destitute of grace in the heart, the sound will soon cease to offend, and they will eagerly inhale the blasphemous breath and become champions in impiety. For want of habit they may not swear with so easy a grace as the older soldiers; they will for that reason make great exertions and invent new oaths, which will stimulate their fellows again to exceed in daring impiety. Seldom does a soldier return from the camp without the foul mouth of profanity. It is astonishing to think that those who are most exposed to death should be most daring in wickedness!

War occasions gambling. A great proportion of the amusements of the camp are petty plays at chance, and the stake usually a drink of grog. The play is fascinating. Multitudes of soldiers become established gamblers to the extent of their ability, and often, if they return to society, spread the evil among their neighbors.

War begets a spirit of quarreling, boxing, and dueling; and no wonder that it should, for the whole business of war is nothing else but quarreling and fighting. The soldier's ambition is to be a bully, a hero, and to be careless of his own life and the lives of others. He is therefore impatient in contradiction, receives an insult where none was intended, and is ready to redress the supposed injury with the valor of his own arms, for it will not do for soldiers to shrink from the contest and be cowards.

War destroys the habits of industry and produces idleness. Industry is necessary to good morals as well as to the wealth and happiness of a country, and every wise government will take all laudable means to encourage it; but a large proportion of common soldiers who may return from the armies have lost the relish and habits of manual labor and are often found loitering about in public places, and if they engage in any kinds of labor, it is with a heavy hand and generally to little purpose. They therefore make bad husbands, unhappy neighbors, and are worse than a dead weight in society. Their children are badly educated and provided for, and trained up to demoralizing habits, which are handed down from generation to generation.

These immoralities, and many more that might be named, are not confined to soldiers in time of war, but they are diffused more or less through the whole mass of community; and war produces a general corruption in a nation, and is therefore unwise, even in a temporal point of view. But when we consider the natural effects of these immoralities on the souls of men, all temporal advantages are in comparison annihilated. In this school of vice, millions are ripening for eternal woe. The destroying influence will spread and diffuse itself through the whole mass of society unless the spirit of the Lord lifts up a standard against it.

The state of morals, so much depressed by the American Revolution, was only raised by the blessed effusions of God's holy spirit. If war does actually demoralize a people, then no wise person can consistently engage in it.

## *7. WAR IS UNWISE, AS IT HAZARDS ETERNAL THINGS FOR ONLY A CHANCE OF DEFENDING TEMPORAL THINGS*

Said our blessed Savior: "For what is a man profited, if he should gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

The loss of a soul infinitely exceeds all finite calculations. It is not only deprived forever and ever of all good but is plunged into inexpressible and everlasting misery. All temporal things dwindle to nothing when placed in comparison with eternal realities. The rights, liberties, and wealth of nations are of little value compared with one immortal soul. But it is astonishing to think that millions and millions have been put at everlasting hazard only for the chance of defending temporal things!

The habits and manners of a soldier's life are calculated, as we have already seen, to demoralize them, to obliterate all early serious impressions, to introduce and confirm them in the most daring wickedness, and fit them for everlasting destruction. And notwithstanding, God may have occasionally, to display his sovereign power, snatched some soldiers from the ranks of rebellion and made them the heirs of his grace, yet no sober Christian will say that the army is a likely place to promote their salvation; but, on the contrary, must acknowledge that it is a dangerous place for the souls of men. It may be assumed as an undeniable fact that the great mass of soldiers are notoriously depraved and wicked. With but few exceptions, their impiety grows more daring the longer they practice war; and

when it is considered that thousands and thousands of such are prematurely hurried by war into eternity, with all their sins unpardoned, what an amazing sacrifice appears only for some supposed temporal good. But when it is remembered that this infinite sacrifice is made merely for the chance of obtaining some temporal advantage, the folly of war appears in more glaring colors, as the battle is not always to the strong. Those who are contending for their rights, and are least in the wrong, are about as often unsuccessful as otherwise, and then they very much increase their evils in a temporal point of view. A wise man would not engage in a lawsuit to recover a cent, admitting that it was his just due, if the trial put to the hazard his whole estate. But this bears no comparison with *one soul* in competition with all temporal things; and yet men, professing to be *wise*, not only put one soul at hazard but millions, not for the *chance* of defending all temporal good, but often for a mere bubble, the hollow sound of honor; and many of those who are watching for souls, and must give an account, instead of sounding the alarm, approve of it.

All who engage in war, either in the field or otherwise, practically regard *time* more than eternity, and *temporal* more than *eternal* things. If souls are of more value than temporal things, and eternity of more consequence than time, it must be *unwise* to engage in a war and put souls to immediate hazard of everlasting ruin, and totally wrong for Christians to engage in it.

### 8. WAR IS UNWISE, AS IT DOES NOT ANSWER THE PROFESSED END FOR WHICH IT IS INTENDED

The professed object of war generally is to preserve liberty and produce a lasting peace; but war never did and never will preserve liberty and produce a lasting peace, for it is a divine decree that all nations who take the sword shall perish with the sword. War is no more adapted to preserve liberty and produce a lasting peace than midnight darkness is to produce noonday light.

The principles of war and the principles of the gospel are as unlike as heaven and hell. The principles of war are terror and force, but the principles of the gospel are mildness and persuasion. Overcome a man by the former and you subdue only his natural power, but not his spirit; overcome a man by the latter, and you conquer his spirit and render his natural power harmless. Evil can never be subdued by evil. It is returning good for evil that overcomes evil effectually. It is, therefore, alone the spirit of the gospel that can preserve liberty and produce a lasting peace. Wars can never cease until the principles and spirit of war are abolished.

Mankind has been making the experiment with war for ages to secure liberty and a lasting peace; or, rather, it has ostensibly held out these objects as a cover to its lusts and passions. And what has been the result? Generally the loss of liberty, the overturning of empires, the destruction of human happiness, and the drenching of the earth with the blood of man.

In most other pursuits, mankind generally gains wisdom by experience; but the experiment of war has not been undertaken to acquire wisdom. It has, in fact, been undertaken and perpetuated for ages to gratify the corrupt desires of men. The worst of men have delighted in the honors of military fame and it is what they have a strong propensity for; and how can a Christian take pleasure in that employment which is the highest ambition of ungodly men? The things that are highly esteemed among men are an abomination in the sight of God. Is it not, therefore, important that everyone naming the name of Christ should bear open testimony against the spirit and practice of war, and exhibit the spirit and temper of the gospel before the world that lies in wickedness, and let their lights shine before men?

But what can the men of the world think of such Christians as are daily praying that wars may cease to the ends of the earth, while they have done nothing and are doing nothing to counteract its destructive tendency? Alas! Too many are doing much by their lives and conversation to support its spirit and

principles. Can unbelievers rationally suppose such prayers to be sincere? Will they not rather conclude that they are perfect mockery? What would be thought of a man daily praying that the means used for his sick child might be blessed for his recovery, when he was constantly administering to him known poison? With the same propriety do those Christians pray that war may come to a final end, while they are supporting its vital principles.

It is contrary to fact that war is calculated to preserve liberty and secure a lasting peace; for it has done little else but destroy liberty and peace and make the earth groan under the weight of its terror and distress.

It is contrary to the word of God that war is calculated to promote peace on earth and good will toward men. The law that is to produce this happy effect will not be emitted from the council of war or the smoke of a camp. Instead, the law shall go forth out of Zion, the Lord shall rebuke the strong nations, and they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Then nations shall no more lift up sword against nation; neither shall they learn the art of war any more. Then shall the earth be filled with the abundance of peace and there shall be nothing to hurt or destroy. It is reserved alone for the triumph of the gospel to produce peace on earth and good will to men.

If war does actually provoke insult and mischief; if it increases difficulties, destroys property and liberty; if it diminishes happiness, injures the morals of society, hazards eternal for only the chance of defending temporal things, and, finally, does not answer the end for which it was intended, then it must be *very unwise* to engage in it, and it must be wrong for Christians to do anything to promote it, and right to do all in their power to prevent it.



# WAR IS CRIMINAL

I am now to show that war, when judged on the principles of the gospel, is highly criminal.

## *1. GOING TO WAR IS NOT KEEPING FROM THE APPEARANCE OF EVIL, BUT IS RUNNING INTO TEMPTATION*

I would have it understood that I consider every act of mankind which is palpably contrary to the spirit and precepts of the gospel *criminal*. It is an express precept of the gospel to abstain from all appearance of evil. “Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation” is also an express command of Christ. A person desiring not only to abstain from evil, but from the very appearance of it, will suffer wrong rather than hazard that conduct which may involve doing wrong. He will be so guarded that, if he errs at all, he will be likely to give up his right when he might retain it without injuring others. No person, it is believed, will attempt to maintain that there is no appearance of evil in carnal warfare, or that it is not a scene of great temptation.

One great object of the gospel is to produce good morals, to subdue the irascible passions of men, and bring them into sweet subjection to the gospel of peace. But war cannot be prosecuted without rousing the corrupt passions of mankind. In fact, it is altogether the effect of lust and passion. In times of war, almost every measure is taken for the express purpose of inflaming the passions of men, because they are the vital springs of war, and it would not exist without them. Those who are engaged in war, both in the council and in the field, have a feverish passion that varies as circumstances may happen to change. Those who are actually engaged in the heat of battle are usually intoxicated with rage. Should this be denied by anyone, I would appeal to the general approbation bestowed on the artist who displays most skill in painting scenes of this kind. He who can represent the muscular powers most strongly exerted, the passions most inflamed, and the visage most distorted with rage, will gain the highest applause. The truth of the assertion is, therefore, generally admitted. Some men, perhaps, may be so much under the influence of pride as to have the appearance of stoical indifference when their antagonists are at some distance, but let them meet sword in hand and the scene is at once changed.

The temptations for those who constitute, or those who encourage and support, armies to commit or to connive at immorality are too various and too multiplied to be distinctly mentioned.

Who can deny that war is altogether a business of strife? “But,” said an inspired apostle, “where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.” If war is a scene of confusion and strife and every evil work, it is impossible for anyone to engage in it and avoid the appearance of evil or be out of the way of temptation; those who are armed with deadly weapons and thirsting for the blood of their fellow-mortals surely cannot be said to exhibit no appearance of evil. But, if engaging in wars is putting on the appearance of evil and running into temptation, then it is highly criminal to engage in it.

## *2. WAR IS CRIMINAL, AS IT NATURALLY INFLAMES THE PRIDE OF MAN*

One of the abominable things that proceed out of the corrupt heart of man, as represented by our Savior, is pride. “God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.” “The Lord hates a proud look.” “Everyone that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord.” That pride is criminal and that humility is commendable will doubtless be admitted by all who believe the Scriptures.

Pride, however, is one of the chief sources of war. It is pride that makes men glory in their strength and prowess. It is pride that hinders them from confessing their faults and repairing the injury done to others.

Although pride is commonly condemned in the abstract, yet it is generally commended in soldiers and fanned by every species of art and adulation, not only by men of the world but too often by those who bear the Christian name. And why is it necessary to inflame the pride of soldiers? Because it is well understood that soldiers without pride are not fit for their business.

If war is a Christian duty, why shouldn't the example and precepts of Christ, instead of the example of the heroes of this world, be exhibited to those who fight to stimulate them? Isn't Christ as worthy of imitation as the Caesars and Alexanders of this world? He was a triumphant conqueror; he vanquished death and hell, and purchased eternal redemption for his people; but he conquered by resignation and triumphed by his death. Here is an example worthy of the highest emulation. And why not animate soldiers by it? Only because it would unnerve their arms for war and render them harmless to their foes.

It is so common to compliment the pride of soldiers that, instead of considering it that abominable thing which the Lord hates, they consider it a virtue. We frequently hear "gentlemen of the sword," as they are styled, in reply to the flattery bestowed upon them, frankly declare that it is their highest ambition to obtain the praise of their fellow-citizens; and, of course, they confess that they are seeking the praise of men more than the praise of God. These gentlemen, however, are far less criminal than those who lavish flattery on them. Doubtless, most of them are sincere and think themselves in the way of their duty, while their profession often leads them, necessarily, from the means of knowing correctly what is duty. While professing Christians have been taught from their cradles that the profession of arms is not merely an allowable but a noble employment, it is easy for them to slide into the current and go with the multitude to celebrate victories and to eulogize heroes, without once reflecting whether they are imitating their Lord and Master. But is it not time for Christians to examine and ascertain if war is tolerated in the gospel of peace before they join in festivities to celebrate its bloody feats? A pagan would be astonished if he had been taught the meek, lowly, and forgiving spirit and principles of the gospel, without knowing the practice of Christians, to see a host of men, professing to be influenced by these blessed principles, marshaled in all the pomp of military parade, threatening destruction to their fellow mortals! Would he not conclude that either he or they had mistaken the genius of the gospel, or that they believed it to be but a fable?

It is a notorious fact, which requires no confirmation, that military men, decorated with finery and clad in the glitter of arms, instead of being meek and lowly in their temper and deportment, are generally flushed with pride and haughtiness; and, indeed, what purpose do their decorations and pageantry answer but that of swelling their vanity? Their employment is not soft and delicate. Other men who follow rough employments wear rough clothing; but the soldier's occupation is not less rough than the butcher's, though, in the world's opinion, it is more honorable to kill men than to kill cattle.

But if war has a natural tendency to inflame, and does inflame and increase the pride of men, it is criminal; it does that which the Lord hates, and it must be highly criminal to engage in it.

### *3. WAR NECESSARILY INFRINGES ON THE CONSCIENCES OF MEN, AND THEREFORE IS CRIMINAL*

Liberty of conscience is a sacred right delegated to man by his Creator, who has given no authority to man to infringe in the least on the conscience of his fellow man. Though a man, by following the dictates of his conscience, may be injured by men, yet they have no authority to deprive him of the rights of conscience. To control the conscience is alone the prerogative of God. That man has no right

to violate the conscience of his fellow man is a truth that few, under the light of the gospel, since the days of ignorance and superstition, have ventured to call in question.

But military governments, from their very nature, necessarily infringe on the consciences of men. Though the word of God requires implicit obedience to rulers in all things not contrary to the Scriptures, it utterly forbids compliance with such commands as are inconsistent with the gospel. We must obey God rather than man, and fear God as well as honor the king. But governments, whether monarchical or republican, make laws as they please, and compel obedience at the point of the sword. They declare wars, and call upon all their subjects to support them.

Offensive war, by all professing Christians, is considered a violation of the laws of Heaven; but offensive war is openly prosecuted by professing Christians under the specious name of self-defense. France invaded Spain, Germany, and Russia; England invaded Holland and Denmark; and the United States invaded Canada, all under the pretense of defensive war. The fact is, however, that no man can, on gospel principles, draw a line of distinction between offensive and defensive war so as to make the former a crime and the latter a duty, simply because the gospel has made no such distinction. But while many Christians profess to make the distinction, and to consider offensive war criminal, they ought to have the liberty to judge, when war is waged, whether it is offensive or defensive, and to give or withhold their aid accordingly; otherwise they are not permitted the free exercise of their consciences.

But suppose this principle was adopted by governments. Could they prosecute war while they left every individual in the free exercise of his conscience to judge whether such war was offensive or defensive and to regulate his conduct accordingly? Would it be possible for governments to carry on war if they depended for support on the uncertain opinion of every individual? No, such a procedure would extinguish the vital strength of war and lay the sword in the dust. The fact is well known, and monarchs declare war and force their subjects to support it. In republican governments, the majority declares war and demands and enforces obedience from the minority.<sup>4</sup>

Though the constitutions of governments may, in the most solemn manner, guarantee to citizens the free exercise of their consciences, yet governments find it a practical necessity to make an exception in relation to war, and a man may plead conscientious motives in vain to free himself from contributing to the support of war.

I think it proper here to notice what has appeared to me a gross absurdity among some Christians in this land. They have openly declared that, in their opinion, the late war<sup>5</sup> was offensive; that it was contrary to the laws of God, and that they were opposed to it; but though they wished not to support it because it was criminal, yet they said, if they were called on in a constitutional way, they would support it. Thus did they publicly declare that they would, under certain circumstances, obey man rather than God.

But soldiers actually resign their consciences to their commanders, without reserving any right to obey only in such cases as they may judge not contrary to the laws of God. Were they at liberty to judge whether commands were morally right or not, before they yielded obedience, it would be totally impracticable for nations to prosecute war. Ask a general if his soldiers have the privilege of determining whether his commands are right or not, and he will tell you it is their duty only to obey.

Suppose that a general and his army are shut up in a city in their own country, and that provisions are failing; that an army is advancing for their relief, but cannot reach the place until all means of sustenance will be consumed; that the inhabitants cannot be let out without admitting the besiegers; and that in this extremity, to preserve his army for the defense of his country, the commander orders his men

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<sup>4</sup> Transcriber's note – This is only true if the government is truly acting democratically. There are many examples in which a small number of elected officials have prosecuted a war without the support of the majority of their constituents.

<sup>5</sup> Transcriber's note – The author refers to the war of 1812, which was opposed by the New England states.

to slay the inhabitants, doing this evil that good may come. But some conscientious soldiers refuse to obey a command to put the innocent to the sword for any supposed good. What must be the consequence? Their lives must answer for their disobedience. Nor is this contrary to the usages of war. And Christians satisfy their consciences upon the false principle that soldiers are not accountable for their conduct, be it ever so criminal, if they obey their commanders; all the blame must fall on the officers, which involves the absurdity of obeying man rather than God. Thus soldiers must be metamorphosed into something besides moral and accountable beings in order to prosecute war; and, in fact, they are treated generally not as moral agents but as a sort of machinery to execute the worst of purposes.

The only plausible method of which I can conceive to avoid the above consequences requires that soldiers should not, for all practical purposes, resign their consciences, but, when commands which are morally wrong are given, that they should refuse obedience and die as martyrs. But to enter an army with such views would be to belie the very oath of obedience that they take. Besides, who could execute the martyrs and be innocent? In this way all might become martyrs, and the army be annihilated.

But if war does not admit the free exercise of conscience on Christian principles, then it is criminal for Christians to become soldiers, and the principles of war must be inconsistent with the principles of Christianity.

#### *4. WAR IS CRIMINAL, AS IT IS OPPOSED TO PATIENT SUFFERING UNDER UNJUST AND CRUEL TREATMENT*

That patient suffering under unjust and cruel treatment from mankind is everywhere in the gospel held up to view as the highest Christian virtue, probably few professing Christians will deny.

But notwithstanding this truth is generally admitted, there is very commonly introduced a carnal, sophisticated mode of reasoning to limit, or explain away, this precious doctrine, which is peculiar to the gospel and which distinguishes it from all other kinds of morality and religion on earth. It has relation, it is said, only to matters of religion and religious persecution – as if the gospel required mankind actually to regard a little wealth and a few temporal things more than all religious privileges and life itself; for, by this human maxim, men may fight to defend the former, but not the latter. And this maxim is built on the supposition that Christians are not bound strictly by gospel precepts in relation to temporal things, but only in relation to spiritual things. Hence it is said that the martyrs conducted themselves nobly in refusing to fight for the privilege of worshiping the true God, but if Christians now refuse to fight to defend their money and their political freedom, then they act in a dastardly manner and violate the first principles of nature. Thus are temporal regarded more than spiritual and everlasting things.

The precepts of the gospel, however, unequivocally forbid returning evil for evil, and enjoin patient sufferings under injurious and cruel treatment. A few instances shall be quoted: “Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient towards all men. See that none render evil for evil to any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and unto all men.” “If, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.” The apostle James, in his solemn denunciation against oppressors, said, “Ye have condemned and killed the just, and he doth not resist you.” He then immediately exhorts the Christians, saying, “Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord.” “Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one for another, love as brethren, be tenderhearted, be courteous, not rendering evil for evil, railing for railing; but blessings instead, knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing.” “For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open to their

prayers; but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil. And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?"

A patient, forbearing, and suffering disposition is peculiar to the lamb-like temper of the gospel, and is wholly opposed to the bold, contending, and daring spirit of the world that leads mankind into quarreling and fighting.

It is generally admitted, I believe, that it is the duty of Christians patiently to suffer the loss of all temporal things, and even life itself, rather than willfully violate any of God's commands. If, then, it is the duty of a Christian patiently to suffer death rather than bear false witness against his neighbor, be he friend or foe, is it not equally his duty patiently to suffer death rather than kill his neighbor, whether friend or foe? Not merely taking away the life of our neighbor is forbidden, but every exercise of heart and hand that may have a natural tendency to injure him. But which is the greatest evil: telling a lie, or killing a man? By human maxims you may do the latter to save your life, but not the former – though the former might injure no one but yourself, while the latter, besides injuring yourself, might send your neighbor to eternal destruction.

The spirit of martyrdom is the true spirit of Christianity. Christ himself meekly and submissively died by the hands of his enemies, and instead of resistance, even by words, he prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Stephen, when expiring under a shower of stones from his infuriate murderers, prayed, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." St. Paul testified that he was not only ready to be bound, but to die for the Lord Jesus. The early martyrs resigned their lives with patient submission as witnesses for Jesus – and this at a time when "Tertullian has told us that Christians were sufficiently numerous to have defended themselves against the persecutions excited against them by the heathen, if their religion had permitted them to have recourse to the sword."<sup>6</sup>

The spirit of martyrdom is the crowning test of Christianity. The martyr takes joyfully the spoiling of his goods, and counts not his life dear to himself. But how opposite is the spirit of war to the spirit of martyrdom! The former is bold and vindictive, ready to defend property and honor at the hazard of life, ready to shed the blood of an enemy. The latter is meek and submissive, ready to resign property and life rather than injure even an enemy. Surely patient submission under cruel and unjust treatment is not only the highest Christian virtue, but also the most extreme contrast to the spirit of war.

If it is a duty required by the gospel not to return evil for evil, but to overcome evil with good; to suffer injustice and to receive injury with a mild, patient, and forgiving disposition; not only in words but in actions; then all kinds of carnal contention and warfare are criminal and totally repugnant to the gospel, whether engaged in by individuals or by communities.

Can it be right for Christians to attempt to defend with hostile weapons the things that they profess but little to regard? They profess to have their treasure not in this world but in heaven above, which is beyond the reach of earthly invaders, so that it is not in the power of earth or hell to take away their dearest interests. There may be a propriety in the men of the world exclaiming that their dearest rights are invaded when their property and political interests are infringed upon; but it is a shame for Christians to make this exclamation, while they profess to believe that their dearest interest is in the hand of Omnipotence, and that the Lord God of hosts is their defense.

Whoever, without divine command, dares to lift his hand with a deadly weapon against the life of his fellow man, for any supposed injury, denies the Christian character in the very act, and relies on his own arm instead of relying on God for defense.

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<sup>6</sup> Sir Henry Moncrief Wellwood in his Sermons, page 335.

## *5. WAR IS CRIMINAL, AS IT IS NOT DOING TO OTHERS AS WE SHOULD WISH THEM TO DO TO US*

Our blessed Savior said, "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets." If we wish men to be kind and forbearing to us, we must be kind and forbearing to them; if we wish them to return love for hatred and good for evil, then we must return love for hatred and good for evil; if we wish not to be injured by men, then we must not injure them; if we wish not to be killed, then we must not kill.

But what is the practical language of war? Does the man who is fighting his fellow man and exerting all his strength to overcome him really wish to be overcome himself and to be treated as he is striving to treat his enemy? Can it be believed that England, in the late war, wished France to do to her what she endeavored to do to France; or that the latter really desired in return what she endeavored to inflict on England? If not, both violated this express precept of Christ.

None can say, consistently with the principles of the gospel, that they wish to be killed by their enemies; therefore none can, consistently with those principles, kill their enemies. But professing Christians do kill their enemies, and, notwithstanding all they may say to the contrary, their actions speak louder than their words. It is folly for a man to say he does not wish to do a thing while he is voluntarily exerting all his powers to accomplish it.

But if the act of war does violate this express precept of Christ, then it must be exceedingly criminal to engage in it.

## *6. WAR IS INCONSISTENT WITH MERCY, AND IS THEREFORE CRIMINAL*

Mercy is the grand characteristic of the gospel, and the practice of mercy is the indispensable duty of man. "Be ye merciful, as your Father also is merciful." "For he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." "For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath showed no mercy."

Mercy is that disposition which inclines us to relieve distress, to forgive injuries, and to promote the best good of those who are not deserving. Mercy in us towards our enemies implies seeking and pursuing their best good for time and eternity. It is sinful to exercise any affection towards enemies short of that benevolence or mercy which involves the advancement of their best good, and Christians may not suspend this disposition, or do evil that any supposed good may come; for no law can be of higher authority than the express precept of Christ which requires this disposition towards enemies, and of course no other consideration can be paramount to this, for nations are as much bound as individuals.

It is surely too grossly absurd for any to pretend that destroying the property and lives of enemies is treating them mercifully, or pursuing their best good for time and eternity. Nor can any so impose upon their imaginations as to think that injuring mankind is treating them with benevolence or mercy.

But the direct object of war is injury to enemies; and the conduct of soldiers generally speaks a language not easily to be misunderstood. Though soldiers are not always as bad as they might be, their tender mercies are often but cruelty. When they storm a fortified place and do not put all the captives to the sword, they are complimented for exercising mercy, merely because they were not so cruel as they might have been. But shall a highway robber be called an honest man because he takes but half the money of him whom he robs? Is it an act of mercy, when a man encroaches on your property, to take away his life? Do nations exercise mercy towards each other when they enter into bloody wars in consequence of a dispute that shall govern a small portion of territory? Or does a nation show mercy to another that has actually invaded its rights by falling upon the aggressor and doing all the injury in its

power? This surely is not forgiving injuries. And when two contending armies come in contact and rush on each other with all the frightful engines of death and cut each other to pieces, they do not appear to me as merciful, kind, and tender-hearted, forgiving one another in love, even as God for Christ's sake forgives his children. Yet this is the rule by which they should act and by which they will at last be judged.

But the whole system of war is opposed to mercy, and is therefore altogether unlike the spirit of the gospel, and must be criminal.

## *7. WAR IS CRIMINAL, AS IT IS INCONSISTENT WITH FORGIVING TRESPASSES AS WE WISH TO BE FORGIVEN*

Our Savior said: "If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive your trespasses." "Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven."

Here it is evident that the everlasting salvation of men depends on their exercising forgiveness towards their enemies; for if they forgive not, they will not be forgiven of God, and with what measure they mete to others, it will be measured to them again.

To forgive is to pass by an offense, treating the offender not according to his desert, but as though he had done nothing amiss.

But do the principles of war lead individuals or nations to pass by offenses and to treat offenders as if they were innocent? Do they not, on the contrary, require justice and exact the very last mite? Has it the aspect of forgiveness for us, when an enemy trespasses on our rights, to arm with weapons of slaughter and meet him on the field of battle? Who, while piercing the heart of his enemy with a sword, can consistently utter this prayer: "Father, forgive my trespasses, as I have forgiven the trespasses of this my enemy"? But this, in reference to this subject, is the only prayer the gospel warrants him to make. And professing Christian nations, while at war and bathing their swords in each other's blood to redress mutual trespasses, are daily in their public litanies offering this prayer; but is it not obvious that either their prayers are perfect mockery, or they desire not to be forgiven but to be punished to the extent of their deserts?

If individuals or nations desire that God would forgive their trespasses, then they must not only pray for it, but also actually exercise forgiveness towards those who trespass against them; and then they may beat their useless swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks and learn war no more.

But it must be very criminal to engage in war, or to tolerate it in any way, if it is inconsistent with the forgiveness of injuries as we hope to be forgiven, and in this respect violates the precepts of the gospel.

## *8. ENGAGING IN WAR IS NOT MANIFESTING LOVE TO ENEMIES OR RETURNING GOOD FOR EVIL*

Returning good for evil and manifesting benevolence to enemies is, perhaps, the most elevated and noble part of Christian practice – the inculcation of which in the gospel exalts Christianity far above any other form of religion, and proves it to be not only divine but efficacious to subdue the turbulent and corrupt passions of men; and for these reasons this part of duty ought to be zealously advocated and diligently performed by everyone who bears the Christian name.

The ablest writers who have defended the divine origin of the Scriptures against infidels have urged this topic as constituting conclusive evidence in their favor. Unbelievers, instead of attempting to meet the argument fairly, have urged the inconsistency of Christians in acting contrary to so conspicuous a rule of duty. Such is and ever has been the most powerful weapon that infidels can wield against Christianity. But it is the will of God that by doing good we should put to silence the ignorance of foolish men. Let Christians act in strict conformity to this part of Christian practice, and they will wrest from the infidel's hand his strongest weapon.

That exercising benevolence towards enemies and returning good for evil is inculcated as one of the most important doctrines of the gospel is evident as well from the whole tenor of the New Testament as from the express commands of the Son of God: "I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you, that ye may be the children of your Father in heaven." "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head." "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."

Such are some of the divine precepts on this subject. So different, however, are the laws of war among Christian nations, that rendering comfort or relief to enemies is considered high treason, and they punish with death the performance of the very duty that God commands as a condition of eternal life!

The common sense of every man revolts from the idea that resisting an enemy by war is returning good for evil. Who would receive the thrust of a sword as an act of kindness? Was it ever considered that killing a man was doing good to him? Has not death always been considered the greatest evil that could be returned for capital crimes? But the principles of war not only allow enemies to return evil for evil by killing one another, but also secure the highest praise to him who kills the most. It is often said of those who distinguish themselves in butchering their fellow men that "they cover themselves with glory!"

Nations, when they go to war, do not so much as pretend to be actuated by love to their enemies. They do not hesitate to declare in the face of Heaven that their object is to *avenge* their wrongs. But, said an inspired apostle, "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but give place unto wrath, for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine; I will repay,' saith the Lord." Retributive judgment, the execution of strict justice, or vengeance, God declares often, belongs to him. He has reserved it in his own hand as his sovereign prerogative.

It is not very surprising that savage pagans should glory in revenge, but that those should do so who have the Bible in their hands, and profess to take it as the rule of their faith and practice, is truly astonishing. It is still more astonishing that some ministers of the gospel not only connive at but also approve of the spirit and practice of revenge by war.

But though the whole tenor of the gospel absolutely enjoins returning good for evil and blessing for cursing; yet the open and avowed principles of war are to return evil for evil, and violence for violence.

If the principles of war are so directly opposed to the principles of the gospel, if the practice of war is so perfectly contrary to Christian practice, then it must be very criminal for Christians not to bear open testimony against war, and much more criminal to do anything to promote it.

## *9. WAR IS CRIMINAL, BECAUSE IT IS ACTUALLY RENDERING EVIL FOR EVIL*

It is a fact, which can neither be disguised nor disputed, that the whole trade of war is returning evil for evil. This is a fundamental principle in the system of self-defense. Therefore every exertion in the power of contending nations is made to inflict mutual injury, not merely upon persons in public



employment and upon public property, but indiscriminately upon all persons and property. Hence it is an established rule of what is styled “civilized warfare” that if one party takes a person suspected of being a spy, they put him to death, which act is retaliated by the other the first opportunity. If one party storms a fortified place and puts the garrison or the inhabitants to the sword, the other, in their defense, must retaliate the same thing, and, if possible, to a greater degree. If one side executes a number of captives for some alleged extraordinary act, the other, on the principles of self-defense, may execute double the number. The first may then, on the same principles, double this number; and so they may proceed to return evil for evil, till one or the other yields.

The principles of self-defense require not merely an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, but two eyes for one eye, and two teeth for one tooth. They require the retaliation of an injury to a double degree – otherwise, there would be no balance in favor of the defensive side. But, as both parties must always be on the defense, both must, of course, retaliate to a double degree. Thus war is aggravated and inflamed, and its criminality is raised to the highest pitch.

The doctrine of retaliation is not only openly avowed and practiced by professing Christian nations, but is sometimes defended before national councils by professing Christians of high standing in churches. “O! Tell it not in Gath! Publish it not in the streets of Askelon, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph!”

That the retaliation of injury, of whatever kind it may be and to whomsoever it may be offered, is most absolutely and unequivocally forbidden by the whole spirit of the gospel dispensation, as well as by its positive precepts, surely can never be fairly disputed.

The great Author and finisher of our faith said, “Ye have heard that it hath been said, ‘An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.’ But I say unto you that ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.” Whether the literal import of these words is contended for or not, they cannot fairly be construed as teaching anything short of a positive and unconditional prohibition of the retaliation of injury. Had our Lord added to these words the maxim of the world, “If any man assaults you with deadly weapons, you may repel him with deadly weapons,” it would have directly contradicted the spirit of this command and made his sayings like a house divided against itself.

The apostles largely insist upon this doctrine of their divine Master, thus: “Recompense to no man evil for evil.” “Be ye all of one mind, not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing.” “See that none render evil for evil to any man.” These comprehensive passages make no conditions or limitations, and are, therefore, applicable to all men and binding upon all in all situations and circumstances under the light of the gospel. But had they added, “If any man injures you, you may return him an injury and repel violence with violence,” it would have been most palpably absurd, and the precepts of the gospel would have been truly what infidels have asserted they are – a series of gross contradictions.

But I repeat that the open and avowed principles of war, even among Christian nations, are those of returning evil for evil. Surely, nations neither aim nor pretend to aim at the best good of their enemies; but, on the contrary, their real and professed object in the sight of God and man is to do them, while at war, all the injury in their power. What means that language which conveys instructions to those who command ships of war, to *sink*, *burn*, and *destroy*, if it does not mean evil to enemies? Why do nations encourage the cupidity of men by licensing and letting loose swarms of picaroons on their enemies, if it is not to inflict evil on them? But all this is sanctioned under the notion of self-defense, and, as though it were a light thing for men thus publicly to trample on the laws of the gospel, they lift up their daring hands to heaven and supplicate God’s help to assist them in violating his own commands! No apology can be made for such proceedings until it is shown that war is not returning evil for evil.

But what is it to return evil for evil?

When one man is injured by another and returns injury, he returns evil for evil and violates those precepts of the gospel which have been quoted. When one association of men is injured by another association and the injured returns an injury, evil is returned for evil and those precepts are violated. When one nation infringes on the rights of another and they in return infringe on the aggressor's rights, they return evil for evil and violate those precepts. When one nation declares war against another and is repelled by war, evil is returned for evil and those precepts are violated. But these things are constantly practiced, without a blush or a question as to their propriety; and God is supplicated to aid in the business.

To what a state has sin reduced our world? Isn't the church covered with darkness and the people with gross darkness? A man may now engage in war with his fellow man and openly return evil for evil, and still remain in respectable standing in most of the churches, being at the same time highly applauded and caressed by the world lying in wickedness!

But if we are here to be directed and at last to be judged by the gospel, no man can return evil for evil, in war or otherwise, without aggravated guilt.

### *10. WAR IS CRIMINAL, AS IT IS ACTUALLY DOING EVIL THAT GOOD MAY COME*

That it is an evil to spread distress, desolation, and misery through a land and to stain it with the blood of men, probably none will deny. War, with its attending horrors, is considered by all, even those who advocate and prosecute it, to be the greatest evil that ever befalls this wicked, bleeding, suffering world.

Though men go to war primarily to gratify their corrupt passions – for they can never propose the attainment of any good by war which shall be commensurate with the natural and moral evils that will be occasioned by the acquisition – yet the prospect of attaining some supposed good must be held out as a lure to the multitude and a means of self-justification.

Usually, the object of war is pompously represented to be to preserve liberty, to produce honorable and lasting peace, and promote the happiness of mankind; and to accomplish this, liberty, property, and honor – that honor which comes from men – must be defended, though war is the very thing that generally destroys liberty, property, and happiness, and prevents lasting peace. Such is the good proposed to be attained by the certain and overwhelming evil of war.

But no maxim is more corrupt, more false in its nature, or more ruinous in its results than that which tolerates doing evil that good may come. Nor can any defend this maxim without taking the part of infidels and atheists, to whom it appropriately belongs, and with whose principles and practice alone it is consistent.

The apostle Paul reprobates this maxim in the severest terms, and he considered it the greatest scandal of Christian character to be accused of approving it: "As we be slanderously reported," said he, "and as some affirm that we say, 'Let us do evil that good may come,' whose damnation is just."

If war is in fact an evil, and it is prosecuted with a view to attain some good, then going to war is doing evil that good may come. It is therefore doing that which scandalizes Christian character; that which is wholly irreconcilable with the principles of the gospel, and which it is highly criminal for any man or nation to do.

## *11. WAR IS OPPOSED TO THE EXAMPLE OF THE SON OF GOD, AND IS THEREFORE CRIMINAL*

The example of the Son of God is the only perfect model of moral excellence, and his moral conduct, so far as he acted as man, remains a perfect example for Christians. But did he appear in this world as a great military character, wearing a sword of steel, clothed with military finery, and surrounded by glittering soldiers, marching in the pomp and parade of a warrior? No. He was the meek and lowly Jesus, despised and rejected of men. He was King of kings and Lord of lords, but his kingdom was not of this world. Had his kingdom been of this world, then would he have appeared as an earthly conqueror, and his servants would have been warriors.

Though a prince, he was the Prince of Peace. At his advent the angels sang, "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will to men." "He came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them." He was the Lamb of God, meek and lowly. He followed peace with all men; he returned good for evil and blessing for cursing, and "when he was reviled he reviled not again." Finally, he was "brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth." That he did this as a necessary part of his mediatorial work need not be denied; but that he intended it also as an example to his followers is fully confirmed by an inspired apostle, who said, "If, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, threatened not; but committed himself to him who judgeth righteously."

Christ taught his disciples the doctrines of peace and commanded them to take up the cross and follow him, to live in peace and to follow peace with all men. His last gift to them was peace. He said to them, when about to send them into the world, "Behold I send you forth as lambs among wolves," thus teaching them what treatment they might expect and what character they must maintain among wicked men. The nature of lambs and wolves is too well known for anyone to mistake this figurative representation. Wolves are fierce, bloody, and ravenous beasts; but lambs are mild, inoffensive, and unresisting, having no means of relief but by flight. If a host of professing Christian warriors, marshaled under the ensign of a preying eagle or a prowling lion, clothed in all the splendor of deadly armor, and rushing forward to destroy their fellow creatures, are in figurative language but *lambs*, then I confess that I am at a loss where to look for the *wolves*! Do these warlike Christians appear mild as lambs and harmless as doves, kind and tenderhearted, doing good to all, to friends and foes, as they have opportunity? Can fighting be living peaceably with all men? Is it returning good for evil, and overcoming evil with good? If not, then it is not imitating the example of Christ.

If Christians were like Christ, their warfare would not be carnal, but spiritual, corresponding with the armor that he has provided. They would conquer by faith and overcome by the blood of the Lamb, not counting their lives dear to themselves.

On the whole, if to engage in war is not avoiding the appearance of evil, but is running into temptation; if it inflates the pride of men; if it infringes on the rights of conscience; if it is not forgiving trespasses as we wish to be forgiven; if it is not patient suffering under unjust and cruel treatment; if it is not doing to others as we would have them do to us; if it is not manifesting love to enemies and returning good for evil; if it is rendering evil for evil; if it is doing evil that good may come; and if it is inconsistent with the example of Christ, then it is altogether contrary to the spirit and precepts of the gospel and is highly criminal. If it is so, then Christians cannot engage in war or approve of it without incurring the displeasure of Heaven.

In view of the subject, if what has been said is in substance correct, and of this I desire the reader conscientiously to judge, then the criminality of war and its inconsistency with the gospel are undeniable.

It is admitted by all that war cannot exist without criminality somewhere, and generally where quarreling and strife are, there is blame on both sides. And how it is that many Christians, who manifest a laudable zeal to expose and counteract vice and wickedness in various other forms, are silent on the subject of war, silent as to those parts or practices of war which are manifestly and indisputably criminal, is to me mysterious. There has been a noble and persevering opposition against the inhuman and cruel practice of the slave trade, and by the blessing of God the efforts against it have been successful, probably for the time, beyond the most sanguine expectations. When the lawfulness of this practice was first called into question, it was violently defended by professing Christians as well as by others. Comparatively few Christians fifty years ago doubted the propriety of buying and holding slaves; but now a man advocating the slave trade could hardly hold a charitable standing in any of the churches in this vicinity. But whence has arisen so great a revolution in the minds of professing Christians on this subject? It has happened not because the spirit or precepts of the gospel have changed, but because they are better understood.

Christians who have been early educated to believe that a doctrine is correct, and who cherish a respect for the instructions of their parents and teachers, seldom inquire for themselves, after arriving at years of maturity, unless something special calls up their attention; and then they are too apt to defend the doctrine they have imbibed before they examine it, and to exert themselves only to find evidence in its favor. Thus, error is perpetuated from generation to generation until God, in his providence, raises up some to bear open testimony against it; and as it becomes a subject of controversy, one after another gains light, and truth is at length disclosed and established. Hence it is the solemn duty of everyone, however feeble his powers, to bear open testimony against whatever error prevails, for God is able from small means to produce great effects.

There is at present in many of our churches, a noble standard lifted up against the abominable sin of intemperance, the greatest evil, perhaps, war excepted, in the land, and this destructive vice has already received a check from which it will never recover unless Christians relax their exertions. But if war is a greater evil than drunkenness, how can Christians remain silent respecting it and be innocent?

Public teachers consider it to be their duty boldly and openly to oppose vice. From the press and from the pulpit they denounce theft, profaneness, Sabbath breaking, and intemperance; but war is a greater evil than all these, for these and many other evils follow in its train.

Most Christians believe that in the millennial day all weapons of war will be converted into harmless farming tools, that wars will cease to the ends of the earth, and that the benign spirit of peace will cover the earth as the waters do the seas. But there will be then no new gospel, no new doctrines of peace; the same blessed gospel that we enjoy will produce "peace on earth and good will to men." And is it not the duty of every Christian now to exhibit the same spirit and temper that will be then manifested? If so, let everyone "follow the things that make for peace," and the God of peace shall bless him.

## **OBJECTIONS ANSWERED**

As was proposed, a number of objections to the general sentiments that have been advocated shall be stated and answered.

### *1. WHAT IF WE ARE ATTACKED BY AN ASSASSIN?*

*Objection.* Shall we stand still and suffer an assassin to enter our houses without resistance and let him murder our families and ourselves?

*Answer.* I begin with this because it is generally the first objection that is made to the doctrine of peace by all persons, high and low, learned and unlearned. It is an objection derived from a fear of consequences and not from a conviction of duty, and might with the same propriety have been made to the martyrs who, for conscience' sake, refused to repel their murderers with carnal weapons. Now it is made to Christians who, for conscience' sake, refuse at this day to resist evil. Let the consequences of nonresistance be what they may, no Christian will pretend that defense with carnal weapons is not criminal if the gospel really forbids it, for the command of the gospel is the rule of duty. But I presume that this objection arises altogether from an apprehension of consequences rather than from regard to duty.

Every candid person must admit that this objection is of no force, until the question whether the gospel does or does not prohibit resistance with deadly weapons is first settled. It might, therefore, justly be dismissed without further remark; but as mankind is often more influenced by supposed consequences than by considerations of duty, and as the objection is very popular, it may deserve a more particular reply.

In the first place, I would observe that the supposition of the objector relates to a very extreme case, a case which has very rarely, if ever, occurred to Christians holding to nonresistance with deadly weapons, and it bears little or no resemblance to the general principles or practices of war which are openly advocated and promoted by professing Christians. Should an event like that supposed in the objection take place, it would be a moment of surprise and agitation in which few could act collectedly from principle. The response would probably be made in perturbation of mind. But war between nations is a business of calculation and debate, affording so much time for reflection that men need not act from sudden and violent impulse, but may act from fixed principle. In this respect, therefore, war is a very different thing from what is involved in the objection, and it does not in the least affect the principles or practice of systematic warfare. It is not uncommon to hear persons who are hopefully pious, when pressed by the example and the precepts of Christ against war, acknowledge that most of the wars which have existed since the gospel dispensation cannot be justified on Christian principles. Yet these very persons are never heard to disapprove of the common principles of war, or to counteract them by their lives and conversation before a wicked world. On the contrary, they will often eulogize heroes, join in the celebration of victories, and take as deep an interest in the result of battles as the warriors of this world. If their conduct is called in question, they will attempt to justify it by pleading the necessity of self-defense, and immediately introduce the above objection, which is by no means parallel with the general principles and practices of all wars.

The truth is, war is a very popular thing with mankind, because war is so congenial to its natural dispositions; and, however gravely some men may, at times, profess to deplore its calamity and wickedness, it is too evident that they take a secret pleasure in the approbation of the multitude and in

the fascinating glory of arms. We have reason to believe that this objection is often made merely to ward off the arrows of conviction that would otherwise pierce their consciences.

The objection, however, wholly overlooks the providence and promise of God. Assassins do not stroll out of the circle of God's providence. Not only is their breath in his hand, but the weapons they hold are under his control. Besides, God's children are dear to him, and he shields them by his protecting care, not suffering any event to befall them except such as shall be for his glory and their good. Whoever touches them touches the apple of his eye. He has promised to be a very present help to them in every time of need, and to deliver those who trust in him out of all their trouble. He will make even their enemies to be at peace with them. The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous and his ears are open to their prayers, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil; and who is he who will harm you if you are followers of that which is good? But if you suffer for righteousness' sake, you should be happy, and not be afraid of their terror, or troubled. If God thus protects his children, who can be against them? Isn't the arm of the Lord powerful to save, and a better defense to all who trust in him than swords and guns? Whoever found him unfaithful to his promises or unable to save? Aren't the hosts of heaven at his command? Aren't his angels swift to do his will? "Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." If the Lord is on their side, Christians have no cause to fear what man can do unto them. The blessed Savior said, "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it, and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it."

If consequences are rightly examined, they may prove to be of more importance than at first supposed. If the gospel does forbid resistance with deadly weapons, then he who saves his temporal life by killing his enemy may lose his eternal life, while he who loses his life for Christ's sake is sure of everlasting life. Thus the Christian, if he is killed, goes to heaven; but the assassin, if he is killed, goes to hell, and the soul of the slayer is in danger of following. Whoever kills another to prevent being killed himself, does it on presumption, for, whatever may be the appearances, only God can know before the event has taken place whether one man will assassinate another. Men, however, seem to think little of killing or being killed by fighting, whether in single combat or on the field of general battle, though they shudder at the idea of being put to death by an assassin, unless they can inflict or attempt to inflict on him the same evil.

But the objection is usually made on the supposition that the doctrine in question requires Christians to stand still and rather court the dagger than otherwise. This is an unfair statement, for it would be presumption to stand still when there was a chance of escape. Besides, the Christian must act on the defensive, not with carnal, but with spiritual weapons, which are more powerful when exercised in faith than swords or spears.

Probably no instance can be found of robbers murdering such as conscientiously held to nonresistance. It is resistance that provokes violence; forbearance and good will repress it. But if instances of this kind may be found, it is no evidence against the doctrine in question any more than against the principles of the Martyrs. God may, for wise reasons, call away some of his children by the hands of murderers. If so, instead of losing, they save their lives.

## 2. *SELF-DEFENSE IS THE FIRST LAW OF NATURE*

*Objection.* Self-defense, and, if necessary, with deadly weapons, is the first law of nature. All of the animals in creation are armed with means of defense, and the principles of the gospel are not contrary to the principles of nature. Therefore, self-defense is not inconsistent with Christianity.

*Answer.* It is admitted that the laws of the gospel are not contrary to the primitive laws of nature, but it is by no means granted that they are consistent with the laws of corrupt nature. In consequence of the revolt of man, the earth was cursed for his sake. It appears probable that, before the fall of man, animals were harmless and docile; and it is not improbable that when the curse shall be removed, when the earth shall be filled with righteousness and peace, the lion and the lamb may literally lie down together. At present, indeed, the dove, the lamb, and some other animals have no means of defense, unless flight is considered such. And while warriors are figuratively represented by ferocious beasts, real Christians are represented by lambs and doves. So far as nature is made to speak fairly on the subject, it speaks in favor of the doctrine that has been advocated.

But corrupt nature strongly dictates many things quite contrary to the precepts of the gospel, and no doctrine will be given up more reluctantly by corrupt nature than that of the lawfulness of war, because no doctrine is more congenial with the depraved feelings and propensities of unsanctified men. “Their feet are swift to shed blood. Destruction and misery are in their ways, and the way of peace have they not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes.”

### 3. *WAR IS CONSISTENT WITH MORAL LAW*

*Objection.* The precepts of the gospel are consistent with the moral law, or the eternal nature of things, which is forever the standard of right and wrong to all moral beings in the universe. War has been prosecuted consistently with this rule of right and wrong. Therefore, war cannot be contrary to the precepts of the gospel.

*Answer.* This is an objection founded on an indefinable something aside from divine precept. Yet, as some terms in it have been much used in polemic divinity by men of eminent talents and piety, whose praise is in the churches, I think it neither proper nor modest to dissent from so high authority without offering some reasons. I shall, therefore, make a few general observations on what is called the moral law, the eternal rule of right and wrong, or the nature of things – all of which phrases, I believe, have been occasionally used by eminent writers as conveying the same ideas.

I cannot agree with those who suppose that a moral law or nature of things exists independently of the will of God and is the common law of God and man. It appears to me as inconsistent to suppose a law to exist without a lawgiver as to suppose a world to exist without a creator. If God is the only eternal and independent Being in the universe, and if all things are the work of his power and goodness, then the supposition that an eternal law exists independently of him appears to me to be absurd, as on this supposition there exists a law without a lawgiver and an effect without a cause. If God is not the author of all things, then there must be more than one eternal cause of things.

To suppose that the reason and fitness of things independently of the will of God, either in his works, his providence, or word, can be a rule of man’s duty appears to me as inconsistent as to suppose that men might institute divine worship from such fitness of things independently of the existence of God; for the will of God to man seems as necessary to lay a foundation of moral obligation and to direct man’s obedience as the existence of God is necessary to lay a foundation of religious worship. Should it be asked whether the laws of God are not founded on the eternal nature and fitness of things, I would answer that such a supposition appears to me no more reasonable than to suppose that his power is founded on the eternal capacity of things; for the capacity of things has just as much reality and eternity in it to found the omnipotence of God upon, as the reason and nature of things have to found his infinite wisdom or justice upon.

I therefore dissent from all standards of moral obligation which are supposed to exist aside from, and independently of, the divine will; and fully agree with the Assembly’s Shorter Catechism, in the answer

to this question: "What is the duty which God requires of man? The duty which God requires of man is obedience to his revealed will." Should it, however, be said that things do exist aside from the divine will, that it does not depend on the divine will, but on the nature of things, that two and two make four, or that a thing cannot be in motion and at rest at the same time, it is by no means admitted that this order or constitution of things exists independently of God. Instead, it is believed to be as much the effect of his power and goodness as anything else. And if God is not the author of all the laws both in the natural and moral world, it may reasonably be inquired, who is?

If God is the moral governor of the world, then all his laws over men, as moral beings, must be moral laws. To make a distinction between the laws designed to regulate the moral conduct of men, and to call some of them moral and others by different names, seems to me unnecessary, since I find no such distinction in the Scriptures. Because some of God's laws were intended to be temporary, under certain circumstances, they were no less of a moral nature on that account; neither was it any less criminal to violate them.

As created things are in some respects constantly changing, and as the relations of things are often varied, so a law may be relatively right at one time and relatively wrong at another. But as man is frail and shortsighted, and is incapable of seeing the end from the beginning, he is totally unable of himself to judge what is and what is not right. Hence, a revelation is necessary from God to direct his steps.

That there is a fitness of things and a standard of moral right and wrong cannot be denied, but, instead of being founded in a supposed nature of things independent of God, it originates in the very nature and perfections of God himself, and can never be known by man any farther than the nature and perfections of God are known. A standard of right and wrong independent of God, whether by the name of moral law or the nature of things, is what never has been and never can be intelligibly defined. It is like a form without dimensions, like a foundation resting on nothing. It is, therefore, in my opinion, as extravagant to talk of an eternal nature of things, without reference to the laws of God, as it would be to talk of an eternal wisdom or an eternal omnipotence, independent of the existence of God.

But if the statement of the objector is meant only to imply a rule of right and wrong emanating from the nature and perfections of God, and coincident with his laws, then – admitting the propriety of the terms moral law, the nature of things, etc. – the objection, if it proves anything, may prove quite too much for its advocates, for under certain circumstances it has been consistent with this rule of moral right and wrong utterly to exterminate nations, to destroy men, women, and children, and show them no mercy.

Besides, the whole force of the objection rests on the supposition that no laws which have existed, and which were not contrary to the moral law, can be abrogated under the Christian dispensation or be inconsistent with the precepts of the gospel. It must follow that whatever has been morally right and lawful for men to do must forever remain right and lawful to be done. This is a necessary result from the premises; but no Christian can consistently subscribe to this. The premises must, therefore, be unsound and the objection of no force.

If literal sacrifices, slavery, and many other practices, which are totally abolished under the Christian dispensation, were not contrary to the moral law under the Old Testament economy, why may not the same be true of war? Why may not the gospel forbid war as consistently as it can forbid slavery?

#### *4. THE ESSENCE OF MORALITY IN THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS IS THE SAME*

*Objection.* The nature of religion and morality under the ancient dispensation was the same as under the new. Love to God and man was the substance of the law and the prophets, and though truth under



the former was inculcated more by types and ceremonies, yet the essence of religion was the same under that as under the present dispensation. Since war was not inconsistent with the nature and precepts of religion then, it cannot be inconsistent with the nature and precepts of religion now, under like circumstances.

*Answer.* It is readily admitted that the essence of religion is the same under the present as under the former dispensation, both requiring at all times and in all actions holy exercises of heart in cordial obedience to divine command; yet the laws for external conduct under the two dispensations differ widely, and the practice of war involves much of the external conduct of men. It was never right for men to indulge unholy feelings in the act of war, but the external act was required as a means of executing the divine vengeance; the gospel does not command, but seems plainly to forbid, the external act of war.

But to suppose that saints under the gospel can ever be placed in circumstances like those of the ancient church is to suppose that they may be put under the same typical economy which has vanished away, given place to the substance, and ceased to be binding even on the natural Israelites. To be in like circumstances they must also be made the executors of God's wrath to inflict vengeance, by his particular command, on idolatrous and rebellious nations. The Israelites had the same high authority to exterminate the Canaanites and subdue the idolatrous nations about Palestine that the holy angels had to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah.

It is perfectly plain that if God should positively command Christians to take the weapons of war and not only repel invasion but actually exterminate nations, it would be their duty to obey, and a refusal would be open rebellion against God. The Old Testament saints received such commands, but Christians have no such authority, which makes a material difference in circumstances.

Some general observations relative to the different dispensations of the church of God may illustrate this topic more fully.

The Old Testament economy has sometimes, perhaps without reason, been divided into the Adamic, Patriarchal, and Mosaic dispensations of the church; but as the latter was more full and complete, and as the distinction between the Mosaic and Christian dispensations is common, I shall confine my remarks chiefly to that distinction, though I consider the great distinction to be between the Old and New Testament economies.

The Old Testament economy, in general, was typical of the New. Under the former dispensation literal and temporal things typified spiritual and everlasting things under the latter. The nation of Israel, chosen and separated from all other nations, typified the true Israel of God, who are chosen out of every nation, sanctified, and set apart as a holy nation and peculiar people to offer up spiritual sacrifices to God. The land of Canaan was a type of the heavenly Canaan. Jerusalem was a type of the New Jerusalem from above. Mount Zion and the royal throne of Israel, which were in Jerusalem, typified the heavenly Zion and the throne of the true David who now reigns in glory. The sacrifices were types of spiritual offerings. The Israelites had enemies within and foes without, literal weapons of war and literal warfare, which were types of spiritual foes, spiritual armor, and spiritual warfare.<sup>7</sup> Their kings were seated on the throne of the Lord (see 1 Chronicles 29:23). At the command of God they judged, made war, and conquered their enemies, and thus typified the Son of God who is now on the throne of his Father David, and who in righteousness judges, makes war, and rides forth conquering and to conquer.

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<sup>7</sup> Says the Rev. Dr. Scott, in his Essay, p. 422: "We ought not therefore to fear our enemies because he will be with us, and if God is for us, who can be against us? Or who can doubt but he who is in us is greater than he who is in the world? This was typically intimated in the promises made to Israel respecting their wars with the Canaanites and other nations, which were shadows and figures of the good fight of faith." Bishop Horne, in his preface to the Psalms, views the subject in the same light.

The ancient promises and threats were mostly temporal, but typical of spiritual and everlasting promises and threats. Doubtless the gospel was preached by types and figures under the Old Testament economy, and the saints of old looked upon those temporal things merely as shadows representing a more enduring substance. When they looked upon Canaan, the land of promise, they viewed it as a type of the heavenly Canaan, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on earth seeking a better country. When they looked on the bleeding lamb, they beheld, by the eye of faith, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

Thus we may see that almost the whole of the Old Testament economy was typical and temporary, and not intended to be perfect and everlasting. But under the gospel dispensation we have a new covenant and better promises, which are intended to be perfect and everlasting. It is therefore more proper for those who live under this new and perfect dispensation to look at the substance than at the shadow for a rule of duty. Errors are often and easily propagated by reasoning from analogy and introducing it as proof of sentiments instead of illustration. This is frequently done in relation to the Old Testament economy and common political government. It is not uncommon to hear ministers, in their political sermons, reason and infer just as if there were a perfect parallel between the Jewish theocracy and political governments, when at the head of one was the Lord of hosts and at the head of the others are but men; when one was the church of the living God, and the others are but human institutions. They frequently speak of God's driving out the heathen before his American Israel and planting them in a goodly land, as though there were a perfect parallel between the Americans driving the Indians from their native soil and taking possession of it themselves, without divine commission, and the Israelites going at the express command of God and taking possession of Canaan. Thus they endeavor to keep up a parallel between God's ancient church and civil governments. The economy of God's ancient covenant people was by no means a political institution in the popular sense, but it was a dispensation of the church of God, and in its rites, ceremonies, and government it was typical of the kingdom of the Messiah under his mediatorial reign, and differed widely in its nature, origin, and design from mere political governments. Therefore, all reasoning drawn from a supposed analogy between them is specious and false. The Israelites had no authority to enact laws or to alter God's laws one iota; their duty was to obey them implicitly.

But if Christians take their authority for going to war from the practice of the Old Testament saints, their example will prove too much; it will not only allow war, but *offensive war* in its most dreadful forms.

## 5. ABRAHAM'S WAR WAS APPROVED BY GOD

*Objection.* Abraham went to war, not like the Israelites at the command of God, yet he met with the divine approbation when he returned from the slaughter of the kings. He, therefore, must have acted on a universal law still in force. Since Christians are called the children of Abraham they ought, of course, to imitate his example in such things as God approved.

*Answer.* Abraham, like the Israelites, was under a typical dispensation and practiced rites and ceremonies that were a shadow of good things to come. That he acted without divine command, in the war referred to, is more than we are warranted to say. He was a prophet and the friend of God and probably was acquainted with the divine will on this subject.

Christians are not called the children of Abraham because they imitate his example in war, but because they exercise the same precious faith with him. If Christians are warranted to imitate the example of Abraham in all things that were tolerated by God, then they may sacrifice cattle, practice

polygamy, and buy and hold slaves. But if they object to his example as a rule of duty in these instances, why not object to his example as a rule of duty in the case of war?

But to say that he acted from some universal law still in force is taking for granted the question in dispute, and cannot be admitted without evidence.

The war waged by Abraham against the kings was, as I understand it, offensive rather than defensive. Lot, his brother's son, whom he rescued, did not then belong to his family or kingdom, but was separated from him and was also a patriarch, a father of nations, and a prince or head over his own house or kingdom.

It appears very evident that offensive as well as defensive war was tolerated under the patriarchal economy, as may be seen from the inspired words of Jacob when blessing his sons (Genesis 48:22). The Patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations were types, and doubtless war was allowed under both for the same reasons.

But there can be no doubt that whoever attempts to justify war by the example of Abraham may equally justify the slavery of our fellow-men; and whoever depends on his example for authority for engaging in war, to be consistent, must advocate and defend the doctrine of slavery.

## 6. THE SHEDDING OF BLOOD IS A UNIVERSAL LAW

*Objection.* It appears to be a universal law of God that "whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." If one man, or one nation, attacks another and sheds his blood, his own must be shed in return. Hence this precept not only authorizes taking away the life of a murderer, but also authorizes nations to repel by war nations that wage war against them.

*Answer.* Whether this was a precept given to man as a rule of duty or not is very questionable, though it has generally been so construed, at least since the dark ages of the church, and it is still more questionable whether it is a universal and perpetual law.

If we attend to the phraseology of this decree of God, we shall find it to be very different from that of the precepts, generally, delivered to Moses. God did not say to Noah, as he often did to Moses, "Thou shalt do this or that," but he said, "*I will require the life of man,*" etc. If God had designed to delegate executive authority to Noah and his descendants to execute retributive judgment on the manslayer, the connection of the whole language must have been altered, for God declared what he would do himself. It appears, therefore, to have been God's *decree*, and the promulgation of *his* law by which he would inflict righteous judgment on the guilty. The penalty was intended as a warning to deter mankind from violence, the sin for which the old world was swept away. And I see no reason why this threatening should not be considered parallel with the decrees of Christ – that "all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword," and "he that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity; he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword; here is the faith and the patience of the saints." Why the former should be considered as a rule of obedience for man, and these latter passages not so, I am unable to say. "He that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword" is as positive as "whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed."

It may be observed that the faith and patience of the saints is here spoken of in such a way as to imply that they exercised and manifested their faith and patience when they were put to death by violence or carried into captivity. And, indeed, how could their faith and patience appear if they, like the wicked world, returned evil for evil, carried others into captivity, and killed with the sword?

The original threatening has been fulfilled by the providence, and sometimes by the express command, of God. As Noah was the head of the new world and the father of nations, it seems to have had reference to nations rather than to individuals. All nations that have shed blood in war must, in their

turn, have their own blood shed, so that all those who take the sword may perish with the sword agreeably to the threatening made known to Noah, and to those announced by Christ.

But, if we were to admit that the law quoted in the objection was intended as a rule of duty for man, then it does not appear that it was designed to be universal and perpetual. Before the flood, no authority appears in any sense to have been delegated to man to shed the blood of man. So far from executing the penalty of death or causing it to be executed upon Cain, who was of the wicked one and slew his brother, notwithstanding his guilty forebodings, God threatened a sevenfold vengeance on him who should presume to do it.

Under the Mosaic dispensation, many crimes were punishable with death according to positive precept; but God, for wise reasons, did not always have the penalty executed. David was guilty of murder and adultery, both capital crimes; yet he was permitted to live.

All kinds of vindictive punishment under the Christian dispensation appear to be absolutely forbidden. By vindictive I mean that which is intended to vindicate the law (as executing strict justice) and only prevent offenses (as taking away life), but which is not designed to promote the individual good of the person punished. That punishment which is designed and which has a tendency to promote the good of the punished, as well as to deter offenders, I consider to be strictly disciplinary or corrective, and consistent with the spirit and precepts of the gospel. An apostle said, "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but give place unto wrath; for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay,' saith the Lord." "For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." It has been said that this only forbids a revengeful temper, but this evasion will not do; for Christians are here forbidden to do the very thing which God declares he will do himself, and he does nothing but what is holy.

"Render to no man evil for evil," is a positive precept without any limitation, and which admits of no evasion; and it must plainly rescind the law of shedding man's blood because he had shed the blood of man.

But the exclamation is often made, "What, not punish a murderer with death!" Little do those who make this exclamation think that they themselves also are sinners and that every sin deserves not only temporal death, but also God's wrath and curse forever, and that they are in like condemnation unless redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. For such, it might be well to inquire if they know "what manner of spirit they are of."

The most prominent characteristic of the Messiah's reign over men in this world is mercy, since he has secured the rights and honor of the divine government by the sacrifice of himself so that the guilty may live. He has given his life as a ransom and has taken the world into his hands as the ruler, judge, and rewarder, and offers mercy to the chief of sinners. The merits of his blood are sufficient to cleanse from all sin against man as well as against God. And who can help being astonished at the amazing difference between his laws and his dealings with men, and those sanguinary laws of men according to which under the light of the gospel they punish with death.

The professed principle and design of these laws is strict justice; but, were men dealt with according to strict justice by him who rules above, who would be able to stand? These laws of men accept no atonement for capital offenses. No mercy is offered, for none is provided for those who incur their penalty; but the gospel offers mercy to the chief of sinners while it condemns those who reject the offers. Capital offenders will never be condemned by civil governments for the rejection of offered mercy, for no mercy is provided for them. How unlike the divine government! But Christians are commanded to be merciful, as their Father in heaven is merciful, who showers down blessings on the evil and unthankful. Our Master has told us that we shall be judged with the same judgment we dispense; that it shall be measured to us with the measure we use; that we shall be forgiven if we

forgive; that we shall not be forgiven if we do not forgive; and that we shall have judgment without mercy if we show no mercy.

Christians ought to ponder the subject well before they advocate the consistency and safety of dispensing justice without mercy. Let them learn the meaning of, "I will have mercy and not sacrifice."

## 7. WE ARE TOLD TO SEEK COUNSEL WHEN WAGING WAR

*Objection.* "Every purpose is established by counsel, and with good advice make war." "By wise counsel thou shalt make war," etc. Here, war is recognized as a duty under certain circumstances, and the manner in which it is to be undertaken is pointed out: namely, by wise counsel.

*Answer.* The inspired Proverbs are maxims of wisdom illustrated. For the most part, they were delivered by some familiar subject that existed at the time. The object here is not to inculcate the lawfulness of war but the necessity of sound wisdom in relation to the actions of men; and the subject of war appears to be introduced merely to illustrate this idea. The counsel and wisdom of men in relation to their temporal and worldly concerns are often worthy of imitation in reference to spiritual things; for the children of this world are, in some sense, wiser in their generation than the children of light, and the conduct of worldly men is often very appropriately introduced to illustrate Christian duty. Our Lord said, "What king, going to war with another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?" Doubtless our Lord's design was to warn people to count the cost before they professed to be followers of him, that they might not be deceived and discouraged, and that they might act from principle and not from hypocrisy. But he inculcated these things by referring to the example of kings in their consultations about war, and it is believed that the passages cited previously are of similar import. These references to war, being introduced merely for the illustration of other subjects, will no more prove the lawfulness of war than the reference of the apostle to the Olympic games, for illustration, will prove the lawfulness of those heathen feats. But if this explanation should not be satisfactory, it may be observed that the Proverbs were written under the Old Testament economy which tolerated offensive as well as defensive war. Therefore, it does not appear that any war can be undertaken under the present dispensation, "by wise counsel," except that which is spiritual; so that, if the ancient was typical of the new dispensation, then the passages quoted will now apply only to spiritual warfare.

## 8. JOHN THE BAPTIST DID NOT REBUKE THE SOLDIERS

*Objection.* When the soldiers demanded of John the Baptist what they should do, one of the directions that he gave them was to be content with their wages. If their occupation had been unlawful, then he would not have directed them to be contented with the wages of wickedness.

*Answer.* John the Baptist was under the Mosaic economy, the new dispensation not having commenced. He was only the forerunner of the Lord, a herald to sound his approach. But he gave the soldiers another direction, *i.e.* to "do violence to no man," obedience to which is totally incompatible with war, as that is nothing else but violence. Only hinder soldiers from doing violence to any man and you stop at once the whole progress of war. Therefore, if the directions of John are insisted on as gospel authority, then they will prove much more against the lawfulness of war than in favor of it.

## 9. THE CENTURION AND CORNELIUS WERE NOT REBUKED

*Objection.* The Centurion and Cornelius were Christians and soldiers and highly approved of God for their faith and piety, nor were they directed by Christ or his apostles to renounce their profession. Therefore, the profession of arms is not inconsistent with Christian duty.

*Answer.* They were first soldiers and then Christians, and we have no evidence that they continued in the profession of arms. Nor are we warranted to say that they were not directed to renounce that profession, as the Scriptures are silent on the subject. Peter, it appears, tarried a number of days with Cornelius, and he doubtless explained to him the spirit and precepts of the gospel. It is very probable that neither Cornelius nor the Centurion continued as soldiers in any other sense than they were soldiers of Christ, as the idolatrous rites enjoined on the Roman soldiers were totally inconsistent with the Christian character, aside from the unlawfulness of war itself. Besides, the Roman soldiers were as often engaged in offensive as in defensive war. Therefore, if the argument has any force on the question, it will tolerate not only defensive but also offensive war, and also the idolatrous rites of the Roman armies.

## 10. JESUS HIMSELF PAID TRIBUTE

*Objection.* Our Lord paid tribute money that went to support military power, but he would not contribute to the support of a wicked thing. Therefore, war is not inconsistent with Christianity.

*Answer.* A distinguished trait of the Christian religion is peace. The command is, "Follow peace with all men." "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God."

Our Lord set the example of giving no just cause of offense to any. Tribute was demanded of him unjustly according to the existing laws, but lest fault should be found, he wrought a miracle and paid it. Money is a temporal thing, and belongs to the governments of this world, as the various coins bear the ensign of the nation by whom they were made. The Christian's treasure is not in this world, and when the rulers of this world call for that which bears their own image and inscription, Christians have no right to withhold from them their dues, for they must "render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's." For this cause they ought to pay tribute and resign up temporal things without a murmur to temporal governments, and leave it with Caesar to manage the things of Caesar. Thus far are Christians warranted to act, from the example of Christ and the precepts of the gospel; but how does the lawfulness of war follow from Christians rendering to Caesar his due? Is it because some of the money goes to support war? Probably, of the money which our Lord paid, as much went to the support of idolatry and the games of the day as to the support of war. If the argument is sound, we may not only prove by it the lawfulness of war but the lawfulness of idolatry and many other abominable things practiced by the heathen governments.

## 11. CHRIST TOLD HIS APOSTLES TO GET SWORDS

*Objection.* Our Lord, just before his crucifixion, commanded his disciples to take swords, and, if any were destitute, to sell their garments and procure them, as they would no longer have his personal presence to protect them. And, as they were to encounter great trials and difficulties, they must, besides relying on providence, take all prudent means for their defense and preservation.

*Answer.* That our Lord did not direct them to take swords for self-defense is evident because he told them that two were enough, and because the disciples never made any use of them after their Master directed Peter to his away and pronounced a penalty on all who should have recourse to swords

afterwards. But the design seems to have been to show by example in the most trying situation where self-defense was justifiable, if in any case, that the use of the sword was utterly prohibited under the gospel economy, and to show the criminality and danger of ever using deadly weapons against mankind afterwards. If Christ's kingdom had been of this world, then, he tells us, his servants would have fought; but his kingdom being not of this world, the weapons of their warfare were not carnal but spiritual. He therefore rebuked them for their mistaken zeal, healed the wound they made, and forbade the use of the sword.

## 12. WE ARE COMMANDED TO BE SUBJECT TO CIVIL RULERS

*Objection.* Christians are commanded to be in subjection to civil rulers, who are God's ministers to execute wrath on the wicked and are ministers of good to the church. Therefore, Christians are bound to take the sword at their command, for civil government is ordained of God, civil rulers are not to bear the sword in vain, and Christians may lawfully do what God ordains to be done.

*Answer.* That civil government, so called in distinction from religious government, is ordained by God is fully admitted, and also that God ordains whatsoever comes to pass. But there is a great difference between his decretive and his preceptive will. The former is not a rule of duty for man without the latter; the latter is always a rule of duty. This fact might be proved by a multitude of instances from Scripture. Persons therefore may be very wicked in doing what God ordains to be done, if they act without his command.

That civil governments and civil rulers exist only by God's decretive will, which is fulfilled by his providence and not by his preceptive will, is evident because God has never authorized the appointment of them or given any precepts or any commands as a code of laws to any denomination or class of people as such, distinct from his own covenant people or church. I beg leave to submit this fact as conclusive evidence that civil governments and civil rulers exist only by God's decretive will and not by his preceptive will. Under the ancient dispensation, no laws or directions were given to any class of men, as such, other than God's own covenant people or church, unless some special commands on singular occasions, or the general command to repent and turn to God, be excepted.

The king on the throne of Israel was as truly an officer in the church of God as the high priest who entered into the holy of holies. Both were set apart and anointed with the holy oil, at the command of God, and both were types of the Son of God. The king as much typified his kingly office as the priest did his priestly office. Both were necessary parts of that complete shadow of good things then to come.

Under the gospel dispensation, no authority from God is to be found for appointing and setting apart civil rulers, nor are there any directions given to civil rulers, *as such*, how to conduct in their office, unless those who rule in the church are called civil rulers. All the precepts and directions in the gospel, excepting such as were special (as those which related only to the apostles) or such as are universal (relating alike to all men), are given to the disciples as members of Christ's kingdom, who are not of this world, even as he was not of this world.

The Son of God came into the world to set up the kingdom of heaven, which is a perfect and everlasting kingdom and distinct from all other kingdoms which are to be destroyed to give place to his divine and heavenly reign. He came in the likeness of men, sin excepted, and laid down his life as a ransom for the world, and then rose a triumphant conqueror. In the complex character of God and man, as Mediator, he took the universe, his purchased possession, into his hands as a lawgiver, judge, and rewarder. He took the scepter when it departed from Judah, and is exalted far above all principality, power, might, and dominion, and has a name above every name, all executive power in heaven and earth being given to him as Mediator. Thus, as Mediator, the kingdom of heaven is his kingdom. He reigns

not only as King of kings and Lord of lords but, seated on the throne of his father David, he is forever King in Zion and is head over all things to his church. His kingdom is not of this world, neither are his subjects of this world, though some of them are in it.

He sent out his disciples to appear in a distinct character from the world and to be a light to it by imitating his example and by exhibiting his spirit and temper. They ought not to say, as the Jews did, that they have no king but Caesar, for they have an everlasting King and kingdom and laws perfect and eternal. They should, therefore, set their affections on things above and not on things beneath.

While the kingdoms of this world exist, Christians must remain in captivity to them and must obey all their laws that are not contrary to the laws of the gospel. Otherwise, they cannot remain peaceful, harmless, and blameless in the midst of a wicked world before whom they must shine as lights.

Though the church is now in captivity, yet her redemption draws near, for God will soon “overthrow the throne of kingdoms,” the thrones will be cast down, and the princes of this world will come to naught. The stone which was cut out of the mountain without hands will dash them to pieces, as the potter’s vessel is shivered, and will become a great mountain and fill the whole earth. Then the kingdom and the dominion and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the most high God whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and of whose dominion there shall be no end.

Though God, by his decree, has ordained civil governments and established kingdoms, and will by his providence make them subservient to the good of his church and people, and notwithstanding it is the duty of Christians to be in subjection to them and pay tribute. Yet, it does not follow that their genius and laws may not often be contrary to the genius and laws of the gospel, and, when they are so, Christians must not obey them nor count their lives dear to themselves. It should be distinctly remembered that, when Christians were exhorted and commanded to be obedient to civil rulers, they were under heathen, idolatrous, civil governments, and those civil governments were by no means congenial with the spirit and precepts of the gospel. Still, Christians were commanded to be in subjection to them – not, however, without limitation, for they utterly refused obedience in many instances and nobly suffered or died as martyrs.

Thus civil government may be an ordinance of God, may be subservient to the good of the church, may be an instrument in God’s hands for executing his wrath, and Christians may be bound to obey magistrates in all things not contrary to the gospel; and yet it will not follow that Christians may consistently with the gospel take up the sword or do anything to countenance war.

If it is the duty of Christians to take the sword and enter the field of battle at the command of their civil rulers, then there could be no impropriety in having armies wholly made up of real Christians, especially since it is the duty of every man to become a Christian; and as professing Christian nations are almost constantly fighting each other, it would be perfectly proper for hosts of pious saints to be daily engaged in shedding each other’s blood. But how would it appear, how does it appear, for those who have drunk into the same peaceful and heavenly spirit, who are united together by the tender ties of the Redeemer’s blood, who are all members of the same family, and who hope through divine grace to dwell together in everlasting love and blessedness, to be fighting one another here with relentless fury?

Let us contemplate the subject, in this point of view, a little further. Suppose an English and an American frigate in the time of war, both manned entirely with real Christians, should meet in a neutral port. Ought they not then to treat each other as brethren of one common Lord? As they are all members of the same family and have all been redeemed by the same blood, and sanctified by the same divine spirit, they surely must have the most tender affection for each other, and it would be highly proper for them to meet together for Christian fellowship, worship, and communion. Suppose, then, that they occasionally go on board each other’s ships for religious worship; that their chaplains lead in their



devotions, using such petitions as these – praying that they may be all of one heart and one mind in the knowledge of Christ, knit together in the bonds of Christian love; that they may have much of the wisdom from above which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated; that they may do good to all as they have opportunity, especially to the household of faith; that they may be meek and gentle as lambs and harmless as doves; that they may be kind and forgiving and that, like their Divine Master, they may return good for evil and have their affections on things above and not on things beneath; after which they together partake of the symbols of Christ’s broken body and shed blood, and then part with tender tokens of Christian fellowship and love. They leave the port and meet again at sea. It now becomes their duty, on the principles of war, instead of meeting as Christian brethren, to meet as raging tigers and discharge the flaming engines of death on each other; and in order to perform “their duty to their God and country,” they must exert all their power and skill to destroy one another. The dreadful struggle and carnage must be continued by both parties as long as both can fight. When half of their crews are wallowing in their blood and expiring in agonies, a violent effort must be made by one or both to board the other and end the contest, sword in hand. Those hands which recently saluted each other with Christian love now plunge the envenomed steel into their brethren’s bosoms. At length one is vanquished and yields to the other. Those who remain alive after the conflict again unite in prayer and give thanks to God that he has given them courage and strength to fight so nobly, and that he has shielded their lives in the hour of battle. Thus they again resume their Christian fellowship and communion. This mutual fellowship, communion, and love are perfectly consistent with Christian character, and are required by it. The conduct that has been supposed as enemies when fighting is also entirely consistent with the principles of war and with the character of warriors, and is such as would be highly applauded and admired by the world. But is it not obviously and perfectly absurd and perfectly incompatible with the principles of the gospel for Christians to act in this twofold character? If, however, it is the duty of Christians to obey the command of their rulers and engage in war, then it would be perfectly proper for what has been supposed to take place. Christians may one day surround the table of the Lord together, and the next kill and destroy each other.

The god of this world, not being yet chained down to hell, deceives the nations and gathers them together to battle; but the children of peace, the citizens of Zion, ought not to mingle with them or listen to the deceiver. They should take to themselves not carnal weapons but the whole armor of God, that they might be able to stand in an evil day and to quench all the fiery darts of Satan.

### *13. MAGISTRATES ARE CALLED AVENGERS WHO EXECUTE WRATH*

*Objection.* To deny the right of the magistrate to call on his subjects to take the sword is to deny that he is an avenger to execute wrath, though the gospel expressly declares that he is.

*Answer.* This conclusion does not follow unless it is a fact that God cannot and does not actually make him the instrument of doing it, by his providence, without his command; for, as we have already observed, men may fulfill the decrees of God under his providence, without his command, and be very criminal in the deed. God raised up the king of Assyria and made him the rod of his anger, to chastise his people and to execute wrath upon the surrounding ungodly nations. “Howbeit he meant not so, but it was in his heart to *cut off* nations not a few.” And God declared, with reference to him, “that when he had performed his whole work he would punish the fruit of his stout heart and the glory of his high looks.” It will not be contended that warlike nations are commanded by God to destroy and trample down the nations of the earth as the dust of their feet; yet, when they do so, they doubtless fulfill his high decree and are avengers to execute his wrath on a wicked world.

The beast represented in the Revelation with seven heads and ten horns has generally been considered as an emblem of nations. These ten horns, or powers, are to hate the great harlot of Babylon – to eat her flesh and burn her with fire – and though they destroy the greatest enemy of the church, and in this way are ministers of good to her, yet they receive their power, their seat, and their authority from the old serpent, the dragon. And a magistrate or king may be a minister of good to the church and an avenger to execute wrath, and still be very wicked in the deed and use very unlawful means to accomplish the end. While he fulfills the decree of Heaven, he acts not in obedience to the command of God, but to the dictates of his own lusts and passions.

#### *14. THE ENEMIES WE ARE TO LOVE ARE OUR PERSONAL ENEMIES, NOT THE ENEMIES OF THE STATE*

*Objection.* The passages of Scripture which have been quoted against retaliation and which inculcate love to enemies and the returning of good for evil have reference to individuals in their conduct towards each other, but have no relation to civil government and are not intended as a rule of duty for one nation towards another. They therefore have no bearing on the subject of war.

*Answer.* Those precepts of the gospel appear to be binding universally without any limitation, and men have no right to limit that which God has not limited. If the commands of the gospel are binding upon everyone in his individual capacity, then they must be binding upon everyone in any collective body, so that whatever is morally wrong for every individual must be equally wrong for a collective body. A nation is only a large number of individuals united so as to act collectively as one person. Therefore, if it is criminal for an individual to lie, steal, quarrel, and fight, it is also criminal for nations to lie, steal, quarrel, and fight. If it is the duty of an individual to be kind and tenderhearted and to have a forgiving and merciful disposition, it is likewise the duty of nations to be kind, forgiving, and merciful. If it is the duty of an individual to return good for evil, then it is the duty of nations to return good for evil.

It is self-evident that individuals cannot delegate power to communities if they do not possess it themselves. Therefore, if every individual is bound to obey the precepts of the gospel and cannot as an individual be released from the obligation, then individuals have no power to release any collective body from that obligation. To say that God has given to nations a right to return evil for evil is begging the question, for it does not appear and cannot be shown that God has restricted the precepts of the gospel to individuals, or that he has given any precepts to nations as such, or to any other community than his own covenant people or church. This objection makes government an abstraction according with the common saying, “Government is without a soul.”

No practice has a more corrupt tendency than that of attempting to limit the Scriptures so as to make them trim with the corrupt practices of mankind. Whoever, for the sake of supporting war, attempts to limit these precepts of the gospel to individuals and denies that they are binding upon nations destroys one of the main pillars by which the lawfulness of war is upheld. The right of nations to defend themselves with the sword is argued on the supposed right of individual self-preservation. Since it is said to be right for individuals to defend themselves with deadly weapons, so it is lawful for nations to have recourse to the sword for defense of their rights. But if these passages are applicable to individuals and prohibit them from acts of retaliation, and if the rights of nations are founded on the rights of individuals, then nations have no right to retaliate injury.

## 15. SHALL WE CONDEMN OUR PIOUS FOREFATHERS?

*Objection.* Christians, with comparatively few exceptions, have not doubted the lawfulness of war, and many have actually fought and bled on the field of battle and considered themselves in the way of their duty. And shall all our pious forefathers be condemned for engaging in war?

*Answer.* It is admitted that many pious people have engaged in war, but they might have been in error on this subject as well as on many other subjects. Many of our pious forefathers engaged in the slavery of their fellow men, and thought themselves in the way of their duty, but does it follow that they were not in error? The circumstance that multitudes defend a sentiment is no certain evidence of its truth. Some of the reformers were objected to because the multitude was against them. Popularity, however, ever has influenced and ever will influence mankind more than plain gospel duty, until the earth shall be filled with the abundance of peace. But notwithstanding this, it is not right to follow the multitude to do evil. All ought to remember that they have no right to follow the example of anyone any further than that example coincides with the example of Christ or the precepts of the gospel. All other standards are fallible and dangerous.

If real Christians have, from mistaken zeal, prayed against each other, fought each other, and shed each other's blood, this does not justify war.

## 16. WE CANNOT SURVIVE AS NONRESISTANTS

*Objection.* If Christians generally should adopt these sentiments, it would be impossible for them to subsist in this world in its present state, and if they did continue it must be in abject slavery. They would become hewers of wood and drawers of water to the tyrannical and oppressive, and would only encourage them in their deeds of wickedness. The injustice of men must be restrained or the earth will again be filled with violence. The necessity of the case is such that mankind would be warranted to take up arms to maintain its rights and repel oppressors, if the Scriptures were silent on the subject.<sup>8</sup>

*Answer.* We have the history of the heathen world to teach us what mankind is without the light of revelation. It is full of all unrighteousness, covetousness, and maliciousness; full of enmity, murder, debate, deceit, and malignity; people are proud, boasters, without natural affection, implacable, and unmerciful. The very design of the gospel is to subdue and overcome these abominable passions and dispositions – not, however, by returning violence for violence, but by producing virtues directly contrary. The great duty of Christians is to be a light to this wicked world by exhibiting in their conduct and conversation the spirit and temper of the gospel. If such were the practice of Christians, we have reason to believe that wicked men would be overawed and deterred from their violence in a great measure. Besides, if all real Christians should utterly refuse to bear arms for the destruction of their fellow men, it would greatly diminish the strength and boldness of warlike nations, so that it would be impracticable for them to prosecute war with the vigor and fury that they now do.

But if the gospel prohibits war, then to urge the necessity of the case against the commands of God is open rebellion against his government as well as total distrust of his word and providence. On the other hand, if Christians live in habitual obedience to God's commands, they have the promise that all things shall work together for their good, and they have no reason to fear those who kill the body and after that "have no more that they can do."

It is strange that Christians should have so great a reluctance to suffer inconvenience in worldly things for the sake of the gospel. The scoffs and persecutions of the world and the fear of the loss of

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<sup>8</sup> All these objections introduced are carefully selected from some of the ablest advocates for the lawfulness of war.

worldly things are powerful barriers against *Christian* warfare. The gospel teaches us that all who live godly lives in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution, and that through much tribulation the saints must enter into the kingdom of heaven. Is it not plainly owing wholly to their conformity to the world that they now suffer so little persecution and practice so little self-denial? If there is reserved for them an eternal weight of glory, so what if they, like their Divine Master, should not have a place to lay their heads? If they are to inherit a crown of immortal glory, so what if they are called to suffer the loss of earthly things? If they are hereafter to reign as kings and priests unto God, so what if they are not ranked among the great and honorable of the earth? If they suffer with Christ, then will they also reign with him; but if they deny him, he also will deny them; and if they are ashamed of him, he will also be ashamed of them before his Father and the holy angels. Let Christians then obey his commands and trust to his protection while they resolutely abstain from the wicked practices of the world.

### *17. IT IS OUR DUTY TO PRESERVE LIFE AND LIBERTY*

*Objection.* It is the duty of mankind to use the necessary means for the preservation of life and liberty; we must till the ground, if we expect a crop. It would be presumptuous for us to pray for and to expect our daily bread without using such means as God has put in our power to obtain it, and it would be equally presumptuous to expect the preservation of our lives and liberties without using such means to preserve and defend them as God has put into our hands. We must act as well as pray.

*Answer.* That using the necessary means is the duty of Christians, there can be no doubt; but they must be such as God has appointed, and not such as human wisdom may dictate. There is no dispute as to the propriety of using necessary means, but only as to the kind of means that Christians ought to use. The weapons of their warfare are not carnal, but spiritual, and they are mighty through God to the pulling down of the strongholds of sin and Satan. It is often said, "If you wish to put a stop to war, spread the gospel through the world." We would inquire, "If the gospel tolerates war, how will its universal diffusion put a stop to war?"

As has already been observed, it would be open rebellion to do what God has forbidden, and high-handed presumption to ask his aid in the things which he has prohibited.

### *18. SOME EARLY CHRISTIANS DID NOT REFUSE TO BEAR ARMS*

*Objection.* Some ecclesiastical historians inform us that Christians in the early ages of the church, though they contended so firmly for the faith as to suffer martyrdom rather than submit to idolatry, yet did not refuse to bear arms in defense of their country, even when called upon by heathen magistrates, and their example ought to have weight with us.

*Answer.* The testimony of the early Fathers is entitled to regard, but must not be considered as infallible authority, for they were men of like passions with others and cannot be followed safely any farther than they followed Christ. But the weight of their testimony on the subject, I expect, will be found to stand directly against the lawfulness of war on Christian principles.

Erasmus, who was an eminent scholar, and who was probably as well acquainted with the sentiments of the primitive Fathers as any modern writer, in his *Anti-polemos*, or *Plea against War*, replies to the advocates of war as follows: "They further bring the argument of those opinions or decrees of the Fathers in which war seems to be approved. Of this sort there are some, but they are only late writers, who appeared when the true spirit of Christianity began to languish, and they are very few. On the other hand, there are innumerable ones among the writers of acknowledged sanctity that absolutely forbid war, and why should the few rather than the many intrude themselves into our minds?"

Barclay, who examined the writings of the Fathers on this subject, said, "It is as easy to obscure the sun at midday as to deny that the primitive Christians renounced all revenge and war." Clarkson, who also examined the Fathers, declared that "every Christian writer of the second century who notices the subject makes it unlawful for Christians to bear arms." Clarkson has made copious extracts from the writings of the Fathers against war, a few of which, as quoted by him and others, shall be inserted here.

Justin Martyr and Tatian both considered the devil the author of war. Justin Martyr, while speaking of the prophecies relating to the days of peace, said, "That this prophecy is fulfilled you have good reason to believe, for we who in times past killed one another do not now fight with our enemies." Clarkson added, "It is observable that the word 'fight' does not mean to strike, beat, or give a blow, but to fight in war, and the word 'enemy' does not mean a common adversary who has injured us, but an enemy of the state."

Irenaeus said that Christians in his day "had changed their swords and their lances into instruments of peace, and that they knew not how to fight."

Maximilian and a number of others in the second century actually suffered martyrdom for refusing, on gospel principles, to bear arms.

Celsus made it one of his charges against the Christians that they refused to bear arms for the Emperor. Origen, in the following century, admitted the fact and justified the Christians on the ground of the unlawfulness of war itself.

Tertullian, in his discourse to Scapula, tells us "that no Christians were to be found in the Roman armies." In his declaration on the worship of idols he said, "Though the soldiers came to John and received a certain form to be observed, and though the Centurion believed, yet Jesus Christ, by disarming Peter disarmed every soldier afterwards; for custom can never sanction an illicit act." Again, in his *Soldier's Garland*, he said, "Can a soldier's life be lawful, when Christ has pronounced that he who lives by the sword shall perish by the sword? Can one who professes the peaceable doctrine of the gospel be a soldier when it is his duty not so much as to go to law? And shall he who is not to avenge his own wrongs be instrumental in bringing others into chains, imprisonment, torment, and death?" He also wrote that the Christians in his day were sufficiently numerous to have defended themselves, if their religion had permitted them to have recourse to the sword.

There are some marvelous accounts of Christian soldiers related by Eusebius, but Valesius, in his annotations on these accounts, has abundantly proved them to be fictional, though he was not opposed to war and could have had no other object but to support the truth. Eusebius, in his orations on Constantine, uses such extravagant adulation, which falls but little short of idolatry, that his account of Christian warriors ought to be received with great caution, especially when we remember that church and state were, in his day, united.

On the whole, it is very evident that the early Christians did refuse to bear arms, and although one of their objections was the idolatrous rites connected with military service, yet they did object on account of the unlawfulness of war itself.

We have no good evidence of Christians being found in the armies until we have evidence of great corruption in the church. But admitting that we had good evidence that there were professing Christians in the army at an early period of the church, I expect that it would be of little importance, for the idolatrous rites and ceremonies of the heathen armies were of such a nature as to be totally inconsistent with Christian character, and the example of idolatrous Christians surely ought to have no weight.

Some objections of less importance might be stated which have from time to time been made against the sentiments here advocated, but to state and reply to everything that might be said is not necessary. Specious objections have been and still are made to almost every doctrine of Christianity. Mankind can

generally find some plausible arguments to support whatever it wishes to believe. The pleas in favor of war are very congenial with the natural feelings of the human heart, and unless men will examine them with a serious, candid, and prayerful disposition to ascertain the truth as it is in Jesus, they will be very likely to imbibe and defend error.<sup>9</sup>

The writer, though far from supposing that everything he has said on a subject that has been so little discussed is free from error, is conscious of having endeavored to examine it with seriousness and candor, and feels satisfied that the general sentiments he has advanced are according to godliness. He sincerely hopes that everyone who may peruse these pages will do it in the meek and unbiased spirit of the gospel, and then judge whether war can be reconciled with the lamb-like example of Christ; whether it is really forgiving the trespasses of enemies, loving and doing them good, and returning good for evil; for if it is not, it is unquestionably inconsistent with the spirit and the precepts of Christianity.

All who earnestly desire and look for the millennial glory of the church should consider that it could never arrive until the spirit and practice of war are abolished. All who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity cannot but ardently desire that wars may cease to the ends of the earth and that people should embrace each other as brethren. If so, is it not their duty to do all in their power to promote so benevolent an object? Ought not every individual Christian to act in such a manner that, if every other person imitated his example, it would be best for the whole? If so, would they not immediately renounce everything that leads to wars and fighting and embrace everything that would promote that glorious reign of righteousness and peace for which they earnestly hope, long, and pray? “The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness is quietness and assurance forever.”

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<sup>9</sup> The last point American Christians will give up is the justification of their fathers in the War of the Revolution.

## HYMN

SUGGESTED BY THE PRECEDING TRAIN OF THOUGHT, AND  
APPENDED TO THE ORIGINAL EDITION OF THE ESSAY ON WAR

Great Sun of glory, rise and shine,  
Dispel the gloom of night;  
Let the foul spirits stretch their wings,  
And fly before thy light.

Rebuke the nations, stop their rage,  
Destroy the warrior's skill,  
Hush all the tumults of the earth;  
O speak! Say, "Peace, be still."

Break, break the cruel warrior's sword,  
Asunder cut his bow,  
Command him by thy sovereign word  
To let the captives go.

No more let heroes' glory sound,  
No more their triumphs tell,  
Bring all the pride of nations down –  
Let war return to hell.

Then let thy blessed kingdom come,  
With all its heavenly train,  
And pour thy peaceful spirit down,  
Like gentle showers of rain.

Then shall the prowling beasts of prey,  
Like lambs be meek and mild;  
Vipers and asps shall harmless twine  
Around the weaned child.

The happy sons of Zion sit  
Secure beneath their vines;  
Or, shadowed by their fig-tree's tops,  
Shall drink their cheering wines.

The nations to thy scepter bow,  
And own "thy gentle sway";  
Then all the wandering tribes of men  
To thee their tribute pay.

Angelic hosts shall view the scene,  
Delighted, spread their wings;  
Down to the earth again they fly,  
And strike their lofty strings.

The listening nations catch the sound,  
And join the heavenly choir,  
To swell aloud the song of praise,  
And vie with sacred fire.

“Glory to God on high!” they sound,  
In strains of angels’ mirth;  
“Good will and peace” to men, they sing,  
Since heaven is brought to earth.



# THE MEDIATOR'S KINGDOM NOT OF THIS WORLD, BUT SPIRITUAL

BY AN INQUIRER

The writer of the following pages has, for a considerable time, doubted the propriety of some of the common practices of Christians. To satisfy himself he has, if he is not deceived, candidly and diligently examined the Scriptures with a view to ascertain and practice the truth. After considerable inquiry his doubts increased. He then consulted some highly respectable and pious friends, who frankly acknowledged that they had never fully examined the subject in question, as they had never had any doubt concerning it. They judged the matter weighty and advised him to arrange his thoughts and commit them to paper. This he has endeavored to do as well as a very infirm state of body and a press of commercial business would admit. After submitting what he had written to some of his friends, they unanimously advised him to lay it before the public, hoping that it might have a tendency to call the subject into notice and lead to a more complete and full examination. With this view he has ventured to commit the following sheets to the press. He has only to beg that the Christian who may take the trouble to read them will not be so solicitous to reply to the arguments as to examine and clarify the truth.

The kingdom of our glorious Mediator is but little noticed in the world, yet it is precious in the eyes of the Lord. The Lord has chosen Zion. She is the redeemed of the Lord. He has said that he who touches her touches the apple of his eye. She is purchased by the blood of the Lamb, sanctified by the Spirit of grace, and defended by the arm of Omnipotence. Notwithstanding she may still be covered with sackcloth, the days of her mourning have an end. The Lord will raise her from the dust and make her an eternal excellency and the joy of many generations. The mystical body of Christ is composed of that innumerable company which no man can number – out of every nation, kindred, people, and tongue – which will finally stand before the throne of God and the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands. It is but one body, although composed of many members. The temple, which was a symbol of the church, was composed of many stones, although but one building. The spiritual temple is built of living stones upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone. This spiritual temple will continue to rise under different dispensations until the elect are gathered together from the four winds of heaven and the top stone is carried up with shouts of Grace, Grace, unto it!

The Mediator's kingdom is not of this world. Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews." (John 18:36) In remarking upon these words we are naturally led to consider:

- I. What the Mediator's kingdom is.
- II. Its nature.
- III. Its laws.

From which we propose to make several inferences and illustrations for improvement.

I. Agreeably to the arrangement of our subject, we shall first endeavor to ascertain what the kingdom of the Mediator is; or that kingdom which he so emphatically called "My Kingdom" in distinction from all other kingdoms. Jesus said, "My kingdom..." Our glorious Mediator takes to himself the majesty of a sovereign and claims a kingdom. In his mediatorial character he possesses, in an extensive sense, universal empire. He is exalted far above all principality, power, might, and dominion, and has a name that is above every name. He is King of kings and Lord of lords. He is not only king on his holy hill of Zion but he rules amongst the nations. He is, however, in an appropriate sense, king of saints under the gospel dispensation, as he governs the worlds with a view to his own glory and their exaltation.

That the church, under the gospel dispensation, is in a special manner the kingdom of heaven or the kingdom that Christ so often called his kingdom appears evident (it is thought) from many passages of Scripture. The prophet Daniel, while interpreting the symbols of the four great empires that were to arise in the earth, said that "in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed." This kingdom could not be the Church Universal, for that was established in the family of Adam and had continued without being broken in a line of holy men down to the prophet's day. It must therefore have a special reference to something in the future. When John the Baptist came preaching, he said, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," fully implying that it had not then commenced. He preached repentance preparatory to ushering in that kingdom which the God of heaven was about to set up. In the days of the fourth great kingdom mentioned in the prophecy of Daniel, the Lord Jesus Christ came into our world to establish his kingdom. As he entered upon his ministry he declared that the time was fulfilled and that the kingdom of God was at hand. When he first commissioned his disciples and sent them forth to preach, he directed them to say to their hearers, "The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." In speaking of John the Baptist, he said that John was the greatest of prophets, but added, "He that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he," which must be conclusive evidence that John the Baptist was not in the kingdom of God. At the Last Supper, after our Lord had blessed and partaken of the bread, he said to his disciples, "I will not any more eat thereof until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God." In like manner, after taking the cup, he said, "I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God shall come." All of which seems fully to imply that the kingdom that the God of heaven was about to set up did not commence before the gospel dispensation. Christ came under the Mosaic dispensation, that is, under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, by the sacrifice of himself; "and being found in the fashion of a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and hath given him a name which is above every name." After he arose from the dead he appeared to his disciples "by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." Jesus came and spoke unto them, saying, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen." Here we see the Mediator possessing a kingdom and giving laws to his subjects and commanding obedience. Although his kingdom was then small, like a little leaven, yet it had the power to leaven the whole lump. The stone that was cut out of the mountain without hands will become a great mountain and fill the whole earth. Every knee must finally bow to his scepter and every tongue confess that he is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

From this concise view of the subject, we conclude that the kingdom of God, or Christ's kingdom, is in a special manner the gospel dispensation that was not completely established until after the resurrection of our Lord.

II. The next point of inquiry is its nature. Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world." By this we understand the Mediator's kingdom, not being of this world, supposes that its nature, its laws, and its government are all distinct from the nature, laws, and governments of this world. It is expected that the fact that the Mediator's kingdom is not of this world, but spiritual, heavenly, and divine, will be fully shown by the following reasons.

1st. From the character of the King. He was not born like the kings of the earth. He was the Son of the living God and Heir of all things. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost and born of a virgin. His birth was not celebrated with the earthly-pomp of princes, but by a few humble shepherds and a choir of angels. His palace was a stable and his cradle a manger. When he was a child, he was not amused with toys, but was about his Father's business. When he was dedicated to his ministry, it was not by the appointment of kings or the consecration of bishops, but by the baptism of his humble forerunner, the descent of the Holy Ghost in a bodily shape like a dove, and a voice from the excellent glory, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." His companions were the despised fishermen of Galilee and the angels of heaven. He was "a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief," yet he was the eternal Son of the eternal Father. Nature owned his voice and devils trembled at his power, but he was despised and rejected by men. When he fed the hungry multitude, they were gratified with the loaves and fishes and sought to make him a king, but he departed out of the place, for his kingdom was not of this world. When Satan, the god of this world, offered him all the kingdoms of this world and the glory of them if he would only fall down and worship him, he rebuked him with holy contempt and said, "Get thee hence, Satan," for his kingdom was not of this world. The Mediator did not meddle with the affairs of the governments of this world, for his kingdom was not of this world. When he was solicited to command a brother to divide his earthly substance, instead of complying with the request he only gave a pointed admonition and said, "Man, who made me a judge, or a divider over you?" When his enemies endeavored to catch him in his words by extorting from him something unfavorable to the laws of Caesar, Jesus answered them and said, "Render to Caesar the things which are Caesar's, and to God the things which are God's." When they demanded tribute from him, and that unjustly, according to their own laws, he paid it without a murmur, to set an example of peace and quietness for his disciples. In all things he avoided interfering or meddling with the governments of this world.

2nd. From the representations of the Bible, "The kingdom of God is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." The Mediator's kingdom is founded in right. His scepter is a right scepter. He rules in righteousness. "The unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Righteousness is opposed to all injustice, oppression, and cruelty; it regards the rights of God and man; it requires love to the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our mind, and with all our strength, and to our neighbors as ourselves. His kingdom is a kingdom of peace; he is the Prince of Peace. At his birth the angels sang, "Peace on earth, and good will to men." Peace is opposed directly to all contention, war, and tumult, whether it regards individuals, societies, or nations. It forbids all wrath, clamor, and evil speaking. It forbids the resistance of evil or retaliation, and requires good for evil, blessing for cursing, and prayer for persecution. Our glorious Mediator not only exhibited a pattern of peace in his life but also preached peace in the great congregation. His last and richest legacy to his disciples was the gift of peace. "My peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth, give I unto you." Christ came in the power of the Spirit, and was full of the Holy Ghost. It is the communion of the Holy Ghost that fills the kingdom of heaven with that joy which is unspeakable and full of glory. "Except a man be born

of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.” Finally, we have his own express declaration, “My kingdom is not of this world.”

From what has been said it may be concluded that the Mediator’s kingdom is, in a special sense, the gospel dispensation, or the kingdom of heaven, and that it is not of this world, but spiritual, heavenly, and divine. And this brings us to notice his laws.

III. The laws by which it is governed. It is governed by the same laws that regulate the heavenly hosts. “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect,” is the command of our Divine Master. It is the kingdom of heaven. Jesus said, “My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews.” The laws of the Mediator’s kingdom require supreme love to God. Jesus said, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; this is the first and great commandment.” This implies right apprehension of his being and perfections, and supreme love to his word and delight in his law, such as the sweet singer of Israel expressed: “O how I love thy law! It is my meditation day and night.” It implies unlimited confidence in God and unshaken belief in the testimony he has given of his Son and a spirit of filial obedience to all his precepts.

The laws of the Mediator’s kingdom require love to man: “Thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself.” This prohibits rendering to any man evil for evil; but, on the contrary, it demands blessing. It utterly forbids wrath, hatred, malice, envy, pride, revenge, and fighting; but requires, on the contrary, meekness, forgiveness, long-suffering, tenderness, compassion, and mercy. The subjects of the Mediator’s kingdom are commanded to do good to all as they have opportunity, but especially to those of the household of faith. This command extends not only to the gentle and kind but also to the disobedient and froward – to friends and to enemies. “If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink,” is the command of our Lord. It is understood that this injunction is directly opposed to resisting the oppression of enemies by force. Jesus said, “If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight”; but, instead of avenging wrongs, the explicit direction is “to overcome evil with good.” The Mediator is the only avenger of the wrongs done to his subjects: “For it is written, ‘Vengeance is mine, and I will repay,’ saith the Lord.” In a special manner, the subjects of the Mediator must love the brethren. They must visit the widow, the fatherless, and the afflicted, and live unspotted from the world. The Lord accepts every act of kindness done to the brethren as done to himself, and regards every act of injustice, cruelty, and revenge towards them as expressed towards himself. He considers them his own property, the purchase of his blood. He will, therefore, not only be their portion but their defense – a wall of fire round about them and a glory in the midst. The Mediator sits as King upon his holy hill of Zion, and is swaying his scepter in righteousness throughout his vast dominions.

Having very briefly considered what the Mediator’s kingdom in a special manner is, its nature, and its laws, we now pass, as was proposed, to make several inferences and illustrations.

1. If the Mediator’s kingdom is in a special manner the gospel dispensation, and its nature and laws are not of this world, but spiritual, heavenly, and divine, then we may infer that the kingdoms of this world are not united to the kingdom of our Lord, but are opposed to it. If they are not for him, they are against him; and if they gather not with him, they scatter abroad. They must, therefore, be at war with the Lamb; but the Lamb shall overcome them, for he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords. The great conflict in our world is between the kingdom of the Mediator and the kingdom of Satan, but the victory is not uncertain. Although the “heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing, the kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel

together, against the Lord, and against his Anointed, saying, 'Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.' He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak to them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure." "Out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations; he shall rule them with a rod of iron, and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God."

The Psalmist, by the Holy Ghost, said of Christ, "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel." Again, "He shall cut off the spirit of princes; he is terrible to the kings of the earth." Isaiah, by the revealing spirit, had the scenes of futurity opened to his view. He saw the glorious Redeemer marching through the earth in the greatness of his power; for he saw, by prophetic vision, the great day of his wrath appear, and none but his redeemed were able to stand. In view of the dreadful scene his soul was filled with astonishment, and he exclaimed, "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? This that is glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat? I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me, for I will tread them in my anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments. For the day of vengeance is in my heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered there was none to uphold. Therefore mine arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me. And I will tread down the people in my anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth." From this it appears that the nations of the earth will be gathered like the grapes of a vineyard, and cast into the great wine press of the wrath of God Almighty; and the great Redeemer will thresh them in his anger and trample them in his fury. Their destruction must be inevitable if their laws and governments are directly opposed to the Mediator's kingdom. When he shall come out of his place to terribly shake the nations of the earth, then the *earth*<sup>10</sup> will no longer cover the blood of the slain; for he will make inquisition for blood, and write up the nations. Then he will stain the pride of all glory and bring into contempt all the honorable of the earth. The nations will be like stubble before the devouring fire, they will be chased away like chaff before the whirlwind, and no place will be found for them.

The interpretation of the symbols of the four great empires by the prophet Daniel fully confirms this idea. In first describing the vision to Nebuchadnezzar he said, "Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and broke them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them. The stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." The prophet thus interpreted the vision: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed. The kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter."

Thus we see that the kingdoms of the world, by not submitting to the kingdom of our Lord, but by making war with the Lamb, are devoted to awful destruction, for the Lamb will overcome them. His kingdom will stand, for it is an everlasting kingdom, and of his dominion there shall be no end. The

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<sup>10</sup> The earth, in symbolic language, is supposed by the writer to denote civilized nations, in distinction from the uncivilized, which are symbolized by the agitated sea. Civilized nations will no longer cover the blood of the slain, under the specious idea of defending their rights and liberties.

gospel dispensation (or the kingdom of heaven) must remain forever, as it is governed by the same spirit that prevails in the eternal fountain of blessedness himself. It is therefore emphatically called the kingdom of God not only in distinction from the kingdoms of this world but in distinction from all the other dispensations of the church. It is not of this world; it is the kingdom of heaven – the reign of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

2. If the Mediator's kingdom is not of this world, but spiritual, heavenly, and divine, and the kingdoms of this world are opposed to it, then we may infer that the kingdoms of this world must belong to the kingdom of Satan. There are but two kingdoms in our world. At the head of one is the Mediator, and at the head of the other is Satan. Satan is the god of this world and reigns without a rival in the hearts of the children of disobedience. He is the prince of the power of the air. All the kingdoms of this world and the glory of them are given to him <sup>11</sup> until the time that God shall write up the nations and make inquisition for blood. Then the great battle of God Almighty will be fought, the beast and the false prophet will be cast into a lake of fire, Satan will be bound a thousand years, the saints will take the kingdom and possess it, and wars shall cease from under heaven. After the thousand years, Satan will again be let loose, "and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, the number of whom is as the sand of the sea." "And the devil who deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever." Thus it appears that Satan is the mainspring of all warlike powers, and when he is bound wars will cease, but as soon as he is again let loose they will rage. The writer is sensible that this will be a very unpopular doctrine with the men of this world, and with those worldly Christians who are struggling, teasing, and panting for the profits and the honors of this world. If it is a fact that the nature and laws of the Mediator's kingdom are diametrically opposite to the kingdoms of this world, then the inference is irresistible that the kingdoms of this world belong not to the kingdom of our Lord but to the kingdom of Satan – and however unsavory the truth may be, it ought not to be disguised. Satan is the strong man, but the Mediator is the stronger, and he will bind him and spoil his goods. The Son of God was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil. When he shall destroy the rage of the nations and the tumult of the people, then Satan's goods will be spoiled. When Satan is cast into the bottomless pit, tumult and war will retire with him back to hell, and instead of the blast of the trumpet and the groans of the dying will be heard the shouts of the saints and the songs of the redeemed. Then will be "heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thundering, saying, 'Alleluia, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth.'"

3. If the Mediator's kingdom is not of this world, and the kingdoms of this world are under Satan's dominion, then we may infer the great impropriety of the subjects of the Mediator's kingdom using the weapons of this world and engaging in tumults, wars, and fighting. Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews." The Jews expected in their Messiah a temporal prince, but, because his kingdom was not of this world, they crucified the Lord of life and glory. Had he only appeared in the pomp of this world and in the splendor of a temporal conqueror to vanquish the Romans who were in possession of their earthly Canaan and oppressing their nation, they would immediately have rallied round his standard and followed him to earthly conquest and glory. He was apparently too inattentive to their rights and liberties (which the patriots of this world now emphatically call their dearest interests). They

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<sup>11</sup> If the kingdoms of this world do not belong to Satan, then it was no temptation to our Lord when the devil offered them to him. It is expressly said that he was "tempted of Satan."

said, "If we let him alone, all men will believe on him, and the Romans shall take away both our place and our nation." It may be asked, "Why were the Jews apprehensive, if all men should believe on him, the Romans would take away both their place and their nation?" The answer does not appear difficult. They doubtless perceived that both his life and precepts directly opposed rendering vengeance to their enemies; and, on the contrary, demanded nothing less than love to their enemies, good for evil, and blessing for cursing. This they could not endure, as it directly opposed their carnal desires and filled them with malice against the Prince of Peace. They might, with much greater propriety than any nation under the gospel light, have said, "Shall we imbibe this pusillanimous spirit of doing good to those who oppress us, tamely bend our necks to the yoke of tyranny, suffer our dearest interests to be wrested from us without once making a struggle to defend them? Rather, let us arise and fight manfully, and defend our liberties or die gloriously in their vindication." We say they might, with much greater propriety, have made these declarations than any under the light of the gospel, because they considered themselves under the Mosaic dispensation which had fully tolerated them not only in defensive but offensive war. But when they perceived that the doctrines of the Mediator were calculated to disannul their dispensation and extinguish their carnal hopes (notwithstanding his credentials were divine), their malice was kindled against him, and their vengeance was not satiated until they wreaked their hands in the blood of the Son of God. And we may confidently expect that wherever the same Spirit of Christ lifts up a standard against the same carnal policy and temporal interest, there will follow the same spirit of envy, persecution, and revenge which was manifested against the Lord of life and glory. If any man (no matter who) will live godly in Christ Jesus, he shall suffer persecution. The Spirit of Christ is the same now as it was then, the world is the same, the carnal heart is the same, and the great adversary of souls is the same. Only let it be styled as "patriotic" to persecute the followers of the Lamb of God, and we should soon see the heroes of this world drunk with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus; and probably many would be as conscientious as Paul was while breathing out threats and slaughter against the disciples of the meek and lowly Jesus. It is not impossible that when the witnesses<sup>12</sup> are slain, their crime may be a refusal to use carnal weapons in defense of their country.

As it is a matter of great practical consequence to know whether the subjects of the Prince of Peace are authorized in any case under the gospel dispensation to use carnal weapons or not, we propose in this inference to be a little more particular. Although it is supposed that the Lord Jesus Christ acted in a threefold capacity – as God, Man, and Mediator – yet we have never heard it questioned by Christians that all his conduct as man was to remain a perfect example for his brethren, and all his precepts a perfect rule for their duty. As his kingdom was not of this world, he did not meddle with the governments of this world; he only submitted to all their laws which were not contrary to the laws of his heavenly Father. He was meek and lowly; so little did he possess of this world that he had not where to lay his head. He went about continually doing good. He was full of compassion even to his enemies. He wept over Jerusalem. He was finally "brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as sheep before their shearers are dumb, so he opened not his mouth."

When he was reviled he reviled not again, but committed himself to him who judges righteously. He prayed for his murderers and apologized for his persecutors, saying, "Father, forgive them, for they

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<sup>12</sup> The writer has for a length of time been of opinion that no event has ever yet happened to the church which answers to slaying the witnesses. It has been given as a reason by some that the witnesses have been slain, that so much light has been diffused since the art of printing was discovered, and since the Reformation, that no reason can ever again be found sufficiently plausible to satisfy the consciences of mankind in again taking the lives of their fellow-men in matters of conscience. If our country was invaded and a law should be passed that every man capable of bearing arms should equip himself for its defense, on penalty of being considered as an enemy and to be publicly executed accordingly in case of refusal for conscience' sake, there would not probably be wanting patriots sufficient to execute the laws; if they could not be found in our land of liberty, they might be found amongst the tyrants of the Old World.

know not what they do.” As the church under a former dispensation had divine authority for engaging in war, it is important to ascertain whether this authority was abrogated under the gospel dispensation or not.<sup>13</sup> Most Christians allow that many things have been tolerated under one dispensation of the church and prohibited under another. Few Christians deny that the preceptive will of God is to be our only rule of duty. The knowledge communicated to us of the preceptive will of God to his church, under the first dispensation, is very limited. We find, however, no authority for taking the life of man in any case, not even for murder; but, on the contrary, a sevenfold vengeance was pronounced upon him who should slay the murderer. Under the patriarchal dispensation, he who shed man’s blood by man was his blood to be shed. In this, defensive war was tolerated. Under the Mosaic dispensation, not only defensive but also offensive war was tolerated, and not only *war* was permitted, but *retaliation* as well: “an eye for an eye,” “a tooth for a tooth,” “life for life,” etc.

The question to be decided is whether these regulations are still in force, or whether they were disannulled by the gospel dispensation. The life and precepts of our Lord and his disciples while under the unerring guidance of his spirit must be our only authority in this inquiry. That many things were done away by the gospel dispensation, none will deny who believe the gospel. The ceremonial part, which was only a shadow of good things to come, vanished away when the substance appeared; and not only the ceremonial part was abolished, but many other practices. Polygamy was permitted under the law, but forbidden under the gospel. Divorce was allowed under the Mosaic but prohibited under the gospel dispensation, except in the case of adultery.<sup>14</sup> Under the Mosaic dispensation the penalty for whoredom was stoning to death. This penalty was not enforced under the gospel dispensation, as may be seen in John 8:11. That all kinds of war, revenge, and fighting were utterly prohibited under the gospel dispensation we think appears evident not only from the life of our glorious Mediator, but also from his express precepts. Jesus said, “My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews.” No comment can add force to this passage, for it is expected that no language can be more explicit against defensive war.

In Christ’s Sermon on the Mount he quoted a passage from Exodus, “Ye have heard that it hath been said, ‘An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth,’ but I say unto you that *ye resist not evil*; but whatsoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.” The force of this passage has generally been obviated by saying that we are not to take all the words of our Lord literally. Although this is admitted, yet we are absolutely bound to take the spirit of every word, if we can understand them, by comparing the Scriptures with the Scriptures. That the spirit of this passage is directly opposed to the one our Lord quoted from Exodus, we think cannot fairly be denied; and, of course, it disannulled the precept in Exodus, for he who had power to make laws under one dispensation had power to abrogate them under another.

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<sup>13</sup> If the permission given to the church under the Mosaic dispensation to engage in war has not been disannulled by the gospel dispensation (which is by no means granted), it is thought that it does not admit of the consequences that are generally drawn. The Israelites were God’s covenant people and were utterly prohibited from making any covenant with the nations around them, or engaging with them as allies in their wars. It must therefore be totally improper for God’s covenant people now to unite with those who are strangers to the covenant of promise, and engage with them as allies in their tumult and fighting. It is presumed that no one who has ever read our Constitution will pretend that the American nation has, in the Scriptural sense, made a covenant with God. If the analogy holds good in one point, it must in another; and in that case there is no alternative left for God’s covenant people but either to withdraw from those who are not in covenant with God, or adopt a national religion which must be defended by the weapons of the nation. It is believed that those who will not admit that the permission granted to the Israelites to engage in war was abrogated by the gospel dispensation can never fully answer the arguments in favor of a national religion.

<sup>14</sup> Transcriber’s note – See Tolstoy’s discussion of this topic in his book *What I Believe*.



The blessed Mediator did, in the most explicit manner, command his subjects to love their enemies and render good for evil. We are of opinion that this command is totally incompatible with resisting them with carnal weapons. He said, "But I say unto you which hear, love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you." Let us for one moment compare this precept with defensive war and see if it can consistently be put into practice. Suppose our country is invaded and a professed disciple of the Prince of Peace buckles on the harness and takes the field to repel his enemy by the point of the sword. He advances amidst the lamentations of the wounded and the shrieks of the dying to meet his foe in arms. He sees his wrath kindled and his spear uplifted, and in this trying moment he hears his Lord say, "Love your enemy and render to him good for evil." And suppose his kindness to him is like Joab's to Amasa: he thrusts him through the heart and hurries him to the awful tribunal of his Judge, probably unprepared. Dear brethren, be not deceived, for God is not mocked. Who amongst our fellow men would receive the thrust of a sword as an act of kindness? Only let conscience do its office, and there will be no difficulty in deciding whether defensive war is inconsistent with the gospel dispensation or not. Carnal and spiritual weapons will no more unite under the gospel dispensation than iron and miry clay.

Our very salvation depends on being possessed of a spirit of forgiveness to enemies. "If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." If men invade our rights and trespass upon our privileges, is it forgiveness to repel them at the point of the bayonet? The honest Christian will find no difficulty in conscientiously deciding this question, notwithstanding he may be slow of heart in believing all that is written.

All the conduct of our Lord had meaning to it, and much of it was with an express view to teach his disciples by way of example. A little before he was betrayed, he ordered his disciples to take swords. The object of this must have been either to use them for defense, or for some other purpose. The event proves that they were not taken for self-defense. The question then is, for what were they taken? The event appears fully to answer the question: to prohibit, by way of example, the use of them for self-defense in the most trying situation possible. If any situation would justify self-defense with carnal weapons, it must have been the situation in which our Lord and his disciples were placed at the time he was betrayed. They were in a public garden, they were assaulted by a mob, contrary to the statutes of the Romans and the laws of the Jews, and the object was to take his life. This the disciples knew, and Peter judged it a proper time for defense, and drew his sword and smote a servant of the High Priest and cut off his ear. As our Lord's kingdom was not of this world, he would not suffer his subjects to use the weapons of this world in any situation. He therefore healed the wound they made and rebuked Peter for his mistaken zeal. "Then said Jesus unto him, 'Put up again thy sword into his place, for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot pray to my Father, and he would presently send me more than twelve legions of angels?'" Here we see that our Lord not only forbade his disciples to use the sword in self-defense, but also added a dreadful penalty to transgressors – "all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." The disciples did not then fully understand that his kingdom was not of this world. As soon as they were prohibited using the weapons of this world they all forsook him and fled.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Four things are noticeable from this history. *First*, the subjects of the Mediator's kingdom have no right to use carnal weapons for defense, even in the most trying situation possible. *Second*, is the promulgation of a decree of heaven: that all they (whether states, churches, or kingdoms) who take the sword shall perish with the sword. Every political or ecclesiastical body that is defended with the sword will be destroyed by the sword. In confirmation of this sentiment, we see while the great destroying powers were represented to St. John in the symbols of ferocious beasts, it was added, "If any man have an ear to hear, let him hear. He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity; he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword." But in opposition to this it is said, "Here is the faith and the patience of the saints." We would inquire how the faith and the patience of the saints appear, if they, like the nations of the earth, lead into captivity and kill with the sword?

The apostle James, in his epistle to the twelve tribes of Israel that were scattered abroad, asked them this question: "From whence come wars and fighting among you? Come they not even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not; ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain; ye fight and war, and yet ye have not." "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend to the world is an enemy of God." From this we think it evidently appears that the warlike spirit of the world is directly opposed to God. The god of this world works effectually in the hearts of the children of disobedience and stirs up their lusts, which war in their members, and hurries them on to acts of cruelty, revenge, and fighting.

This subject is of so much practical consequence that it requires a few observations in reply to some of the arguments of worldly and unenlightened Christians in favor of using carnal weapons. It is said that government is an ordinance of God that exists throughout his vast dominion. In heaven above there are angels and archangels, upon earth there are magistrates and powers, and in hell there is the prince of devils. That God in his holy providence has so disposed of events that governments of some kind or other do exist in all parts of his dominion, none but skeptics will deny. But who would pretend that the governments in heaven and hell are not diametrically opposite? One is the spirit of peace and love, and the other, rebellion and war. Perhaps the manifestation of these different spirits here on earth may fairly be the dividing line amongst its inhabitants, and show to which kingdom they belong. They say all powers are ordained of God. Thus far they are correct, but they do not make a proper distinction between the ordination of God and his preceptive will for man. So far as the former agrees with the latter, it is a rule of duty and cannot be any further. One is the rule of God's own procedure (if the expression is proper), and the other the rule of action for his creatures; but the counsel of God and his laws for man are often diametrically opposite. It is not improbable that this is part of the mystery of God that will, by and by, be finished.

The Lord Jesus Christ was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God; and yet, by wicked hands, he was crucified and slain. Here, as in the case of Pharaoh, and many other instances recorded, the divine counsel and the duty of man were directly opposite. To ascertain our duty we must look at the preceptive will of God and not to his eternal counsel. Although all powers are ordained of God, yet it must not be inferred that all the laws of the heathen or civilized world are to be a rule of duty for the Mediator's subjects, or that their spirit is agreeable to the spirit of the gospel dispensation. It is said, "We are commanded to obey magistrates and every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake." All this is admitted. But these injunctions are either limited by other precepts or they are unlimited. If they are unlimited, then all who have died martyrs fell as sacrifices to superstition instead of duty. Notwithstanding these directions were intended as a rule for Christians in all ages, yet they were promulgated while the disciples were under idolatrous governments, and were never intended to encourage them to worship idols.

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*Third*, the weapon that the subjects of the Redeemer are to use for defense is here brought into view: prayer. Nothing that transpired in the garden prevented our Lord from using this weapon when he was betrayed, except for the necessity of the Scriptures being fulfilled. Had he prayed to his Father, more than twelve legions of ministering spirits would have appeared as swiftly as lightning to discharge his will. At the time he shall come in all the glory of his Father, the holy angels will be with him. He will break through the heavens in flaming fire, descend with the shout of the Archangel and the trumpet of God, cleave asunder the earth beneath, and send forth his angels, who will awake the sleeping millions from their tombs and gather together his elect and take them up into the air to be ever with their Lord. *Fourth*, we may expect that angels will be sent to deliver the saints in the times of trouble. Angels are ministering spirits and are sent forth to minister to those who shall be the heirs of salvation. What a consolation it is that the subjects of the Mediator can apply for help in times of trouble to him who has the hosts of heaven at his command, and who has said that he will never leave nor forsake them! The angels of the Lord encamp round about them who fear him, to deliver them out of all their trouble. If God is for them, who can be against them?

These commands must, therefore, be limited. The question is, how are they limited? We understand by the spirit and other precepts of the gospel. We have already shown, we trust, that these absolutely prohibit war in every form. If so, then none of these injunctions can counteract the position we are examining. They only enjoin strict obedience to all human laws under which we live that do not contradict the spirit or precepts of the gospel. When they do, they are not binding and must be resisted – not, however, with carnal weapons, but with spiritual weapons. We must take joyfully the spoiling of our goods and count not our lives dear unto ourselves.

It has been often said that he who refuses to comply with the commands of the magistrate resists the powers that be, and, according to the apostle’s reasoning, resists the ordinance of God and will receive to himself damnation. And, further, as all powers are the ordinance of God, they ought to be supported; and if they cannot exist without the sword, then they must be supported by the sword. Here the subject of the Mediator must make a distinction between resisting the “powers that be” by force of arms, and refusing to obey their unlawful commands. It is not supposed that in one case he would obey and that in the other he would disobey the commands of his Master. No martyr ever considered himself as violating this precept in refusing to sacrifice to an idol at the command of an earthly power; neither will any subject of the Mediator view himself as violating it by refusing to use carnal weapons while he believes that his Lord has utterly forbidden his using them. It is understood that if this proves anything upon the principles of war, that it will prove too much for its advocates. The command is to obey the powers that be, and not the powers that ought to be. If it is taken in an unlimited sense, then it must prohibit resisting even tyrannical powers, and would, of course, condemn every Christian who engaged in the American Revolution. To say that all power is in the hands of the people – and, of course, it is the people who are the powers that be – is thought to be but a quibble. We will suppose a very possible case: that a foreign power completely overturns the government of the people, disannuls their laws, and gives a new code. In that case, the command to obey the powers that be would not be annihilated. The precept originally was given while the disciples were in the midst of tyrannical governments. It is thought that it is so far from tolerating defensive war that it is opposed to it. The precepts of the gospel cannot be dependent upon the convulsions of the nations. If Christians are bound to aid with carnal weapons in suppressing a rebellion, then, if the opposing power gains the predominance, they must turn directly about and fight the very power they were before supporting. Such conduct would not become the citizens of Zion. If it is said the powers that be are Christian rulers, then we say, let them govern only by the laws of the Mediator’s kingdom, and we will bow with reverence before them, and not teach for commandments the doctrines of men, as we cannot receive human laws for divine precepts.

It is stated that our Lord paid tribute, that we are commanded to pay tribute to whom tribute is due, and that tribute supports the governments of this world. This is granted, but the Mediator’s subjects are also required to lead peaceable and quiet lives. This is promoted more by paying tribute than by the refusal. Our Lord directed Peter to pay the tribute lest they should give offense. But paying tribute for the sake of preserving peace is a very different thing from actually engaging in war.

Whenever the Christian is called upon to pay money by way of taxes or tribute, he does not part with any spiritual treasure, but only earthly property, for which he has the example and precepts of the Lord. The currency of the world generally bears the ensign of the nation that made it. If it bears the image and inscription of Caesar, then “render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and unto God the things which are God’s.” Christians, however, whose hearts are upon this idol, will sooner give up their lives than their God. “The love of money is the root of all evil.” The real Christian’s treasure is in heaven and beyond the reach of the powers of earth or hell. The things of this world are but privileges loaned him, to be resigned at the call of his Lord. Shall he then fear those who can only kill the body and afterwards

have no more that they can do? Rather, let him fear him who has power to destroy both soul and body in hell forever. It is better for him to suffer wrong than to do wrong.

The permission granted to the Jewish church to wage war has often been pleaded as authority for Christians. If this proves anything, it proves too much, for not only defensive but also offensive war was permitted under the Mosaic dispensation. The tyrants of the world have not generally contended that this was right since the gospel dispensation. We think, however, that we have fully shown that this was abrogated under the gospel dispensation, and that all kinds of war were prohibited. If so, it has no weight on the subject.<sup>16</sup>

It has been said that Christians with a small exception have never questioned the propriety of defensive war. As it regards nominal Christians, this statement is perhaps correct, but as it respects the real disciples of the Mediator, it is to be questioned. We hear of no Christians in the first ages of the church engaged in carnal warfare until we hear of great corruptions in the church. Most Protestants have been of opinion that those precious disciples who inhabited the dark valleys of Piedmont during the great corruptions of the nominal church were the Redeemer's true subjects. These disciples, of whom the world was not worthy, utterly refused to engage even in defensive war, notwithstanding they were hunted down by their bloody persecutors.<sup>17</sup>

It has been often said that the Reformers, who were good men, did not hesitate to engage in defensive war, and that the Reformation was finally supported by the sword. That the Reformers were generally pious men is readily admitted, and that the Reformation, under divine providence, was a glorious event to the church is also granted. But the history of the Reformers, when written by their friends, abundantly manifests that they were men, subject to like passions with other men, and that all the means they employed could not be justified, either by the spirit or the precepts of the gospel.

Henry the Eighth was a vile man, but he was very active in protesting against the Pope because his holiness would not grant him a divorce. God makes the wrath of man praise him. It will not probably be a great length of time (in the opinion of the writer) before those churches which were defended with the sword will be destroyed by the sword.

It has been further urged that not only the Reformers but most pious Protestants have prayed for the prosperity of the arms of their country, and many have actually fought in the field of battle. All this is likewise admitted. But many pious men have had a mistaken zeal. It is fully believed that Protestants, generally, have been in the habit of considering the Reformation so glorious an event that they have very little inquired whether the means by which it was finally defended were agreeable to the spirit of the gospel or not. They have been taught from their earliest years to consider that the weapons of warfare used by the Reformers were lawful, so that they have not hesitated to follow their example. That the

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<sup>16</sup> Although it is not expected that any intelligent and candid Christian will attempt to say that the arguments that have been advanced may fairly apply to offensive but not to defensive war, yet some weak and unenlightened Christians may make the assertion. In answer to such, we would observe that this would be begging the question and taking for granted the very subject in dispute. We cannot be satisfied with anything short of a candid answer, drawn directly from the spirit and precepts of the gospel. When it is fairly proved that under the gospel dispensation our Lord did draw a clear line of distinction between offensive and defensive war, and that he intended all such precepts as have been adduced to apply to the former and not to the latter, then we will acknowledge the weight of the argument. Until this is done we shall not consider our arguments as answered.

<sup>17</sup> The writer perceives that he has made too unlimited a statement respecting the disciples who inhabited the valleys of Piedmont. Historians have generally considered those who dissented from the Church of Rome during the dark ages as possessing similar sentiments. It is true they did agree in renouncing the authority of the Pope, but in other things they did not all agree. Some courted the protection of earthly powers and united with them in defending their rights by the point of the sword, and were finally destroyed by the sword. Others, instead of defending themselves with carnal weapons, fled from the face of the serpent and were, under divine providence, the seed of the church in the wilderness. It is the latter class to which the writer would be understood as referring.

example and prayers of pious people ought to have weight is readily granted, but to place a blind confidence in them, we understand, is criminal, for their example is to be imitated no further than it agrees with the spirit and precepts of the gospel. These must forever remain a perfect standard of duty, whereas the practice of real Christians, owing to their imperfect state, is constantly changing and often contradictory. During the American Revolution, doubtless, real Christians were praying and fighting for the success of the American arms, and real Christians in the British service were praying and fighting for the success of his Majesty's arms. The truth is, they ought not to pray for war in any shape, but to pray that wars may cease from under heaven, and that God's kingdom may come and his will be done on earth as it is done in heaven. And they ought not only to pray, but also endeavor to advance the kingdom of heaven and put a stop to wars and bloodshed. The opinions of pious people often vary with the increase of light that shines upon the church. One century ago most pious people believed in the propriety of the slave trade, but very few can now be found to advocate the abominable practice. The nature of the crime has not changed, nor the evidence against it, but the truth is that the opinion of pious people has materially changed upon this subject. We ought always to remember that the example of pious people is to be of no weight any further than it agrees with the example of our Lord. It is always unsafe to be looking too much to the fallible example of those whom we have esteemed pious for a rule of duty, while we have the unerring word in our hands to light our way. When anyone is depending upon the example of Christians not under the immediate influence of divine inspiration for evidence to support his hypothesis, it is strong presumptive evidence that he has not the word of God in his favor. By the word of God and by that *only* ought every controversy to be tried.

It is further urged that we are commanded to pray for kings and all in authority. It is true we must pray not only for kings but all men, even enemies. This, however, does by no means imply that we are commanded to pray for a blessing upon their unhallowed undertakings, but it only implies that we must pray that they may be translated out of nature's darkness into the light of the gospel, and from the power of Satan unto the living God.

The great difficulty with the subjects of the Mediator ever has been, and still is, a want of faith in the promises of God. They are prone to be afraid of consequences. They look nearly as much at consequences as the children of Israel did while journeying from Egypt to Canaan. The truth is, they ought to have nothing to do with consequences, but only duties. "Thus saith the Lord," should be their warrant and only guide. If they implicitly follow the command, consequences are all safe in God's hand. Had Abraham looked only at consequences, it is not probable he would ever have been styled the Father of the Faithful. It is not uncommon for timid and worldly Christians to be alarmed at consequences and to argue in this manner: "Shall we stand still and suffer an assassin to enter our houses and take our lives and property without ever attempting to resist him?" All this must go upon the supposition that he who has said he will never leave nor forsake his people, and is a very present help in every time of need, will take no care of them. No assassin could stand a moment before the prayer of faith that would enter the heavens and reach the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. If faithless Christians cannot be persuaded to look at the precepts and the promises, but only at consequences, they ought, at least, to examine them well. Suppose God, in his holy providence, should permit an assassin to take the life of one of his dear children. The consequence would be that he would immediately be translated to glory, and possibly the assassin might become a penitent. But should he take the life of the assassin in defending himself, the consequence then would be that he would hurry him into the abyss of the damned where his probation would be eternally ended. He who puts his trust in the Lord shall not fear what man can do to him; he will be like Mount Zion, which cannot be moved.

Remember, dear brethren, that the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but spiritual, and mighty through God. "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the

whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God (here is the equipment of a soldier of Jesus Christ), that ye may be able to withstand in an evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.” And the very God of peace shall be with you, and he will shortly bruise Satan under your feet. For yet a little while and the Almighty angel will come down with a great chain in his hand, he will lay hold on the dragon – that old serpent, which is the devil and Satan – and will bind him a thousand years, cast him into the bottomless pit, shut him up, and set a seal upon him so that he shall deceive the nations no more until the thousand years are fulfilled. Then wars will cease from under heaven and the implements of death will be converted into the harmless utensils of husbandry, and there will be nothing to hurt or destroy in all God’s holy mountain. The stone that was cut out of the mountain without hands will become a great mountain and fill the whole earth. Then will be heard a loud voice saying in heaven, “Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of God, and the power of his Christ. For the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them.”

It is, however, very important, dear brethren, that we keep it constantly in mind that the nature and precepts of the gospel are the same now as they will be then, in that glorious reign of righteousness and peace, and that it is our duty constantly to be influenced by the same spirit now which will then be manifested by the followers of the Lamb. The little leaven is of the same nature with whole lump when it is leavened. Let us therefore gird up the loins of our mind and watch unto prayer.

4. If the Mediator’s kingdom is not of this world, but spiritual, heavenly, and divine, and if the kingdoms of this world are under the dominion of Satan, and if the subjects of Christ’s kingdom are not permitted to use carnal weapons, then we may infer who is the “great whore that sitteth upon many waters; with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.” A virgin or chaste woman is a familiar symbol in the Scriptures of the true church of God; and an unchaste woman is as familiar a symbol of an apostate or corrupt church. As a lewd woman calls herself by the name of her husband, notwithstanding she has constant intercourse with other men, so the corrupt church calls herself by the name of Christ, notwithstanding she has constant illicit intercourse with the kings of the earth.<sup>18</sup> Understanding the true nature of spiritual whoredom will assist us in ascertaining the bounds of mystical Babylon.

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<sup>18</sup> As the writer has been for some time studying the symbolic language of the Scriptures, and intends (if the Lord will, unless some person more able should attempt an explanation) to give his views to the public, he will not be so particular at present in explaining the symbol of the great whore who sits upon many waters, as he otherwise should. He early perceived that the heavens and the earth, with all their furniture, were used as an alphabet, in the language of things, to represent moral subjects. His object has been to learn the true meaning of each symbol by comparing Scripture with Scripture. No language can be read until the alphabet is first learned. Symbolic language does not, like other languages, change with time and place, but represents the same idea to all nations and at all times. He is of opinion that one symbol does not represent two events, unless it first has a reference to some lesser event which is typical of some more important event. In that case, all together may be figurative of some great ultimate end. Although one symbol is supposed never to represent two different things, yet two or more symbols generally represent one thing. He has found by tracing back a symbol to its first use, that its true

The children of Israel were separated from all the nations of the earth and set apart to be holy unto the Lord. As they were in covenant with the God of Israel, he addressed them in the endearing character of a husband. Whenever they made any covenant or formed a confederacy with the nations around them, or imitated their idolatrous abominations, they were charged with spiritual whoredom. The church, under the gospel dispensation, is redeemed from amongst men out of every nation, and sanctified and set apart to be a peculiar people to show forth the praises of God. It is styled the Bride, the Lamb's wife. Its members are not to be conformed to this world but to be transformed by the renewing of the Spirit. They do not belong to any earthly kingdom, for our Lord has said, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." They are citizens of the heavenly Zion and belong to the household of God – members of the same community, with the innumerable company of angels and the spirits of just men made perfect – and are to be governed by the very same spirit and temper which reigns amongst those blessed inhabitants above. God is an overflowing and unbounded ocean of blessedness and love. Love is therefore the fulfilling of the law.

Whenever the subjects of the Redeemer unite themselves to the kingdoms of this world, and engage in their political contentions and fighting, then it appears they commit spiritual whoredom, for they forsake the fountain of living waters and hew out to themselves cisterns – broken cisterns, which can hold no water. When they thus mingle with the world and unite in its pursuits they may spiritually be styled as adulterers.

While reproving the twelve tribes, which were scattered abroad, for their wars and fighting and friendship to the world, the apostle James styled them as adulterers and adulteresses. In direct opposition to this representation, the first fruits of the church are styled virgins, as not being defiled with women. "These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from amongst men, being the first-fruits unto God and the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile, for they are without fault before the throne of God." As virgins are pure and undefiled, so were the disciples of Christ in the first age of the church when they had no impure intercourse with the kingdoms of this world and followed the Lamb in refusing to engage either in its profits, honors, or fighting. They are, therefore, called virgins, without fault, in opposition to those who mingle with the world, who are spiritually styled as harlots.

It evidently appears, if what has been said is true, that mystical Babylon, that mother of harlots and abominations of the earth, is just as extensive as the union of the church with the kingdoms of this world; and just in that proportion in which an individual Christian, or a single church, or a number of churches united in one body, engage in the honors, profits, and fighting of the kingdoms of this world, just in that proportion they may be said to be guilty of spiritual whoredom.

The writer is well aware that this inference, however just, will be looked upon with contempt by worldly political Christians whose clearest interest is involved in the kingdoms of this world, and especially by those who are clothed in purple and scarlet and have a golden cup in their hands. He has no expectation of being candidly heard by such, but it is God's own dear children who have ignorantly mingled with the world, having been blinded by their education, from whom he expects a candid hearing. "If any man have ears to hear, let him hear."

It is not common for a lewd woman openly to avow to the world her character; neither can it be expected that the mother of harlots will own her name. The writer is of opinion that very few have understood the full dimensions of this mystical city. She appears to him in her greatest extent to be bounded but little short of the whole visible church of God. She is styled "the *great city*, which

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meaning is generally manifest. Since examining the Scriptures with this view, he has been irresistibly drawn into the conclusions now exhibited.

spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.” “And in her was found the blood of prophets and saints and of all that were slain upon the earth.” But a dreadful judgment awaits her: “She shall utterly be burnt with fire, for strong is the Lord God who judges her.” Being mingled with the nations and supported by their power, when they become like stubble before the devouring fire, she will be consumed with them. The whore is represented as riding upon a scarlet-colored beast, and upheld by him.<sup>19</sup>

When he, with all his heads, is cast into the lake of fire, she will likewise be given to the burning flame. But before this great and dreadful day of the Lord shall come, which will burn as an oven, when the whore shall be consumed with the nations of the earth, God will call to his people to come out of her, saying unto them, “Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.” As God’s ancient people were carried captives into literal Babylon, so God’s dear people will be found captives in mystical Babylon, until they hear the command of their Lord to come out of her that they be not partakers of her sins and that they receive not of her plagues. The captive daughters of Zion are very numerous. O that they may soon arise and shake themselves from the dust! “Shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem. Loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion.”

5. If the Mediator’s kingdom is not of this world, and the kingdoms of this world are under the dominion of Satan, and if Christ’s subjects cannot unite themselves to the kingdoms of this world without committing spiritual whoredom, then we may infer the great impropriety of the subjects of the Mediator’s kingdom becoming political Christians and enrolling themselves with the men of this world. They cannot serve two masters, for they will either hate the one and love the other, or else they will hold to the one and despise the other.

How humiliating it is to see subjects of the King of Zion engaged in the drudgery of the prince of darkness, laboring and struggling to support his tottering throne! Satan’s kingdom is divided against itself and must, therefore, come to an end. But how lamentable it is to see the sons of the living God, the subjects of the Prince of Peace, taking sides in the cause of the adversary of souls, and actually opposing and fighting each other under his banner! They do it ignorantly and will, therefore, obtain forgiveness, for they know not what manner of spirit they are of. They are commanded to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather to reprove them.

Before our Lord departed from this world to go to the Father, he gave laws to his subjects for their rule of life until his second coming. All these laws contemplated their residing as a holy nation in the midst of a wicked and benighted world, to reflect the rays of the Sun of righteousness on the thick darkness that covers the people. They were to be a city set upon a hill and a light to the world. The apostle exhorts them to “do all things without murmuring and disputing, that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world.” They must be a peculiar people to show forth the praises of God. How inconsistent is it, then, for the citizens of the heavenly Zion to be mingling with the politicians of this world and uniting in their processions, feasts, and cabals, when they ought rather to be praying for them, that the very sins they commit in these scenes may be forgiven them! Dear brethren, is it not high time to come out from the world and be separated? “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers,

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<sup>19</sup> The writer is fully of opinion that a ferocious beast is never used as a symbol of a corrupt church, but of a tyrannical warlike power. He has been for some time of opinion that the second Apocalyptic beast is rising, that he will possess all the power of the first beast before him, and that under him the false prophet will appear. The witnesses will be slain, and upon his kingdom the six first vials of his divine wrath will be principally poured out. The seventh will be poured upon Satan’s kingdom universally, as he is the prince of the power of the air.



for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial?" "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate," saith the Lord, "and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father to you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters," saith the Lord Almighty."

6. In view of what has been said, we finally infer that every interest that is not built upon the sure foundation stone that God has laid in Zion will be swept away when the storms of divine wrath shall beat upon our guilty world. "For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up," saith the Lord of hosts, "that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." "For the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon everyone that is proud and lofty, and upon everyone that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low." "The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day." "The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath. He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill the places with their dead bodies, and he shall wound the head over many countries." "For, behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh, and the slain of the Lord shall be many." "For the indignation of the Lord is upon all nations, and his fury upon all their armies. He hath utterly destroyed them. He hath delivered them to the slaughter. Their slain shall be cast out, their stink shall come up out of their carcasses, and the mountains shall be melted with blood." "For this is the day of the Lord God of hosts, a day of vengeance, that he may avenge him of his adversaries; and the sword shall devour, and it shall be satiate and be made drunk with their blood." The nations must drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which shall be poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation, and they will be trodden in the great winepress of the wrath of God Almighty. And the great whore which has drunk the blood of the saints and the blood of the martyrs of Jesus will have blood to drink, for she is worthy.

The sword of the Lord has two edges; it will cut off the offending limbs of the church and destroy her enemies. The fire of the Lord will purify his saints but utterly burn up the wicked. He "whose fan is in his hand will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." Although the earth is thus to be desolated, and the nations destroyed, yet the saints of the Most High shall "possess the kingdom for ever and ever." "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him."

Dear brethren, these events are rapidly rolling in the fiery wheels down the descent of time. Although the nations must first drink the vials of divine wrath and the battle of God Almighty must first be fought, yet the time is at hand when we shall no more hear the sound of war, and of garments rolled in blood, for man will cease to be the enemy of man. Everyone will sit quietly under his own vine and under his own fig tree, there will be nothing to hurt or destroy in all God's holy mountain, and the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the channels of the mighty deep.

Dear brethren, it is "high time to awake out of sleep, for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent; the day is at hand. Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light." And let us pray with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit for all men: not only for ourselves, our families, our friends, and the church of God; but for a dying world, that

God would in infinite compassion cut short these days of dreadful calamity for his elect's sake, and in the midst of deserved wrath remember mercy.

“He that hath ears to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.”