

Melchisedec, a priest of God, blessed Abraham, as he returned from the slaughter of the kings. The reign of Jehu was continued unto the fourth generation for slaying the stock of Ahab, and Nebuchadnezer was rewarded for the destruction of Tyre. And we find David, king of Israel, declaring in the text, that his hands were taught to war by the instructions of God. Cases of the same description might be multiplied without number, and some instances might be given in which the actual vengeance of God descended upon those who refused to slay the enemies that ought to have been slain.

We know in point of fact, that there was war even in heaven, and it might naturally be inferred from this, that there *would* be war on earth. If Michael and the angels fought against the dragon; if they who formerly rebelled against the authority of God, were tumbled in the press of war from the ramparts of heaven, and if we are actually satisfied, from the closest and most extensive observation, that every lower species of created animals on earth, live in a state of occasional hostility, in a state subject to contention and war; then it certainly would be *singular* indeed, a single case in the history of angels above, and all other creatures of God's making below, if men alone were exempted from the necessity of war.

It is objected against the lawfulness of war, that Christ has declared that all they who take the sword shall perish by the sword. Yes, but that is declared in the case of those who employ it for the purpose of private revenge, and doubtless, had a special reference to the hour then present, *when*, if any one had used the sword, each and all of them who did so, would have perished. Again, it is objected against the lawfulness of war, that we are commanded to have peace with all men. Yes, but the precept is properly qualified and limited by St. Paul, *if it be possible as much as lieth in you*, to live peaceably with all men—if it be possible, *i. e.* it may be possible and it may *not* be possible. Again, it is objected, that the time shall be when men shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks, and that nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, nor learn war any more; that time *may* come and certainly will come, but it has not yet come, and to all appearances is far enough distant. These are some of the common objections against the profession of arms, all susceptible of an answer of the clearest and flattest kind; objections against a practice, which, as was before shown, has the warrant of the command of God himself, the warrant of the practice of the holy and great men who lived in days of old, which has had the approbation and the reward of God publicly bestowed upon it.

These things may serve to show the lawfulness of your profession, but it is not only lawful—it is *also* necessary. The profession of a soldier is necessary to the *very* existence of mankind; *force* must be opposed to *force*, vio-

lence must be *opposed* to violence. For trace things to their consequences only a few simple steps. If every man that lives on the face of this green and breathing world, were to sell his birthright in it and come to this resolution, I will use no violence, I will neither hurt nor destroy a single creature of God's, whether it be a beast or a bird of prey,—suppose all men were to act upon a resolution of this kind, and what might be expected as the result? Why, if man destroyed not them, they would destroy *him*. If every man made up his mind not to *fight* against them, every man must make up his mind to perish in their jaws. You must either oppose them or be devoured by them. Now, what is true with regard to man and the beasts of prey, is equally true in regard of one class of men and another. If a barbarous and savage race of men make a hostile descent upon a civilized and orderly community, is it the duty of this community to hang their useless arms by their sides, like the tuneless harps of the Jews on the willows of Babylon, and with a patient spirit of martyrdom suffer themselves to be scalped and devoured by a savage and infuriated band? No such thing, it is their duty and a matter of absolute necessity, using the better means and intelligence which God has given them, to frustrate the purposes of their enemy; to muzzle them if possible, and if *that* be impossible, unquestionably to destroy them. The same thing holds with regard to nations. If a cultivated, a prosperous and religious people, are to maintain their advantages or preserve their existence as a people, they must be able to protect themselves from the violence of others. There is no intelligible principle of duty that requires them to suffer themselves to be smashed and destroyed—that requires them to permit themselves to be insulted or plundered.

The best nations, generally speaking, are the strongest; and they ought to be so in order to fulfil the final purposes of God. The purposes of God are the present and future happiness of his intelligent creatures, and in every nation where the truth in Christ has been made known, there is certainly to be found a much greater measure of happiness than in those countries that have not been favoured with the knowledge of it, and in addition to this, the happiness that arises from the confident expectation of a future happiness even when the present life shall have been passed and over. But in order that the present possession and the future enjoyment of an eternal and heavenly blessedness may be possessed and maintained by any people, that people must have the means and the power of protecting itself from violence. In such a world as this, they can only live by opposing the force of their enemies. They can neither maintain their moral nor intellectual ascendancy by any other means. Their safety from external violence must be secured, and if it were a law of nature that the barbarian should always in the course of time, tread