

strengthening of the stakes, the power of believing prayer. Oh, my brethren, if this were to be the last sermon I was ever going to preach, I would ask God to give me this privilege, that I might stir up this missionary congregation to-day to determine that, whatever else is done, there shall be for the next hundred years, as far as we can control it, an entirely new baptism of prayer. There has not been a crisis in the missionary work that has not been turned in answer to prayer. You remember how, in 1858, God opened the doors to half the human race in answer to prayer; how again, in 1878, when the prayers of some of God's saints were turned to increased sanctified giving, there were less than twenty people who in their united gifts gave nearly one million pounds sterling for foreign missions. When God's chosen few began to pray for more laborers, there came a knock from more than seven thousand young men and women in America and England at the doors of the churches and of our boards, saying: "By the grace of God we will go forth to the foreign field." And when I was speaking on missions in Scotland two years ago, the secretaries begged me not to appeal for laborers, for they said: "We have a great many more people applying than we can possibly send with the means at our disposal." Every great crisis in the missionary field has been turned in answer to prayer, and yet the Church has not begun to know what the power of prayer is in waiting on Almighty God for a blessing.

Look at the second Psalm. It is not a prophecy of missionary triumph, although it is often quoted as such. "Ask of Me and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." That sounds like a promise of world-conquest. Yes, but read the next verse: "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." It is a promise and a prophecy that when the kings of the earth conspire against the missionary band, and against the Messiah that leads them, He, the King on His throne, will, in the emergencies and exigencies of such conflict, reach out His rod, not the golden end of grace, but the iron end of power, "and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." And, as in the missionary world revivals have come in answer to prayer, so on the other hand the interpositions of God have come in the destruction of His enemies and the defeat of their armies and the overturning of their hostile councils; and not until the Church believes that God is the answerer of prayer, and that God will interpose by His providence and by His grace, will the Church ever be a triumphant and conquering missionary Church. A beloved Japanese convert and trainer of native teachers, Mr. Neesima, said, with his dying breath, "Advance on your knees." That is the only way to advance in missions. And then I believe the third element by which the stakes are strengthened is a firm confidence in this Gospel as the Gospel of Christ, and in this Word is the Word of God; that it is emphatically the Word of God, the only inspired and infallible Word of God; that, therefore, when I go forth and carry this Word of God, I have all the energies