

iple. Peter stood forth to defend Christ. He drew his sword, and struck a servant of the High Priest, and smote off his ear. Christ discerned in this a false principle. Christ whose mind was omniscient, saw all that such a principle would lead to.— He saw down through the long ages of struggle and contest, and consequent weakness and disaster, through which his church was to pass. He beheld his servants, or those who professed to be so, fighting for his kingdom. He saw the armies enlisted under the banner of the cross, and wielding the sword in his cause. Doubtless all was before his view as it may be before the view of those who now ponder the melancholy history of these contests; and he gives forth at once the principle and the prediction: "Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword, shall perish with the sword." Christ was not to be defended with the sword, nor was his kingdom to be propagated by the sword. If Christ was to defend himself he might have had angelic warriors, legions of angels, now surrounding him, encamping about him:—the sword of the Archangel might have been drawn in his behalf. But it was not thus that Christ's cause was to triumph. He was to triumph by *living*. "How then shall the scriptures be fulfilled that thus it must be?" Scripture must be fulfilled. The counsel of God must be accomplished. The scheme of redemption must be completed. Christ must die. It was inconsistent with the counsels of God, and with the grand objects to be accomplished, that the sword should be drawn from its scabbard. Angels were Christ's armies had it been his pleasure to command them. "Put up thy sword into his place". What majesty, what authority, in these simple words! "Put up again thy sword into his place". Let it sleep in thy scabbard. I have no need of its aid. "My kingdom is not of this world". No, it is not like the kingdom of the earth. It consists only of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. Let it not be propagated by the sword: "All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword". We have a remarkable verification of these words in the history of the crusades, or the wars of the cross, as they were called. The crusades, which were undertaken to recover the Holy Land, and especially the Holy sepulchre, the place where it was supposed Christ was laid, terminated most disastrously to the crusaders themselves. Two millions, it is computed, per-

ished in these enterprises, which were undertaken from time to time, during the 11th, the 12th, and the 13th centuries.— The object was to drive out the infidel from Palestine, and set up the kingdom of Christ in the room of that of the false prophet. But disaster and blood-shed alone were the result. Thousands fell beneath the sword—their blood dyed the plains of Palestine—and the wrecks of armies returned only to announce the defeat of their enterprise. It was not thus Christ's cause was to be promoted. Mahomet might gain by his armies and by the scymitar. The sword of the false prophet was the great means of his success. He achieved his triumphs by his military skill, by the power of the sword. Christ tells us it shall not be so with his kingdom. It cometh not with observation: it is not of this world. It appeals not to the sword, but to the truth. Its progress is the progress of the truth—the progress of conversion. Its conquests are won from the kingdom of Satan, from the empire of darkness. Jesus reigns, and he will reign, till all his enemies are made his footstool. He has his throne in heaven, and his kingdom is in the hearts of men. That kingdom shall advance by the victories of the truth, by the conquests of the Spirit. The sword may oppose Christ's kingdom, but it will not promote it; and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, will prevail over every opposition. Christ, without the aid of the sword, shall yet be King of kings, and Lord of lords."

Verse 54-57. Christ's enemies had no power over him till Christ himself gave them that power, till his hour was come till all that was written in the scriptures was fulfilled. They could not lay hold on him till then. Once it will be remembered they had him on the brow of a hill, near the town of Nazareth, where he had been brought up; and they were going to cast him headlong. But he, passing through the midst of them, went his way. He could as easily have delivered himself now. But how should the scriptures be fulfilled? How should redemption be accomplished? How should God be glorified? How should the world be saved? This was their hour, and the power of darkness. There was a great struggle between Christ and evil principles. Christ had to contend with them in delivering the prey from the mighty, and rescuing the lawful captive. He had to enter into conflict with Satan himself. Nay,