

the forces of nature bring about these great natural results, and there can be no deviation from it. I say that it happens so because God is there. It is God's hand that turns the machinery of the universe, and keeps it all in time. You look at the timetable which a railroad company has put out for the management of the road and the information of the traveling public, and you see that the train is due to leave a certain station at, say 12 o'clock and 15 minutes. You want to take that train. You look at your watch and see just how much time you have, and you go there to the depot expecting the train to be there and to leave just as it is said it will, and it does leave. And why? Not because of any chance; not because the railroad system is so perfected that every train will move itself; but because there is intelligence there at work; because there is power and authority, and every man must keep his place, and every intelligence must move as it is directed. More certain, then, are the forces of nature. God moves in the great universe, and His purposes can never fail. Not one of God's plans is for a moment behind—always on time. It is because God is there.

Now, the one great truth which brings to our souls such abundant comfort and gives to us such a sense of security is that the God of the material universe is the God who cares for our souls and plans for our spiritual development. And that is God's kingdom and power over this world—His authority. Why, you say there is an authority in the laws of nature; that is, you cannot direct them. You cannot plant your corn in the autumn and gather the harvest from it. You must remember that nature must be obeyed. While just as certainly must God be obeyed, if our souls would grow. We must put the seeds of truth into our hearts if we would gather the harvest, the spiritual blessing. Now, in this sense it is a kingdom—God's power, God's authority in this world, and the kingdom which we have in the history in the Bible. To this kingdom, then, along the line of its history, belong the wonderful events of the past—those events which show us the linking together of the forces of nature and the spiritual forces for the development of our souls, for the safety of the soul. We have here the miracles of God. We have his wonderful power manifested toward man. We have that wonderful wisdom of God which seems to find response, and ready response, in the hearts of those who willingly receive the truth of God. God has not loved His people in this world alone. But we find this to be true, that there are multitudes of people who have rebelled against the law of God. They are out of harmony with the spiritual kingdom. They have sinned against God, and have put themselves as aliens outside the Kingdom of God. These are serving themselves. They are serving Satan. They are serving the world. And the expression that is used concerning them is "the world, the flesh, and the devil," as belonging to the kingdom outside the Kingdom of God. And when men are serving the world; when they are serving themselves; when they are serving the devil, they are outside of the Kingdom of God.

Now in the Kingdom of God is authority; and men love that authority. They love to feel the security of it. Why, it has come about, because of sin in this world, that those who belong to the Kingdom of God are here like the great father of people, in the land of an enemy, perhaps. They are here as soldiers away from the center of the government—the outposts, perhaps; and around about them are enemies on every hand, and they know that. But they know that God will care for them, as the soldiers of any nation know that the nation which sent them out will care for them in a foreign country as if they were at home. God says that He will care for His own. Solomon says: "The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe;" and Luther, catching up the thought and putting it into his own experiences, exclaimed, "A strong tower is our God;" and he felt it when going to the Diet of Worms, called there by duty to God and humanity. He says, "I would go, though all the tiles on all the houses should conceal devils to hinder me on the way." But God was with him. God cared for him. And though they must be in the world, while not of it; though Christ's prayer was not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil, God cares for His own wherever they are. One of old said, "He suffered not man to do them wrong; yes, he rebuked kings for their sake," saying, "Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm." God cares for them. He watches over them. He strengthens, He sustains them.

Now then, in this way God's Kingdom is felt. You know England has her soldiers all over the world. England boasts of the fact that everywhere, on all the seas, where the Union Jack may be seen, the power of England must be felt. Our own nation, younger in its history, without quite so much of which to boast around the world, yet lets its flag float everywhere, in all the nations of the earth, and our nation says to the citizens of this nation, "We will protect you at home beneath the stars and stripes, and if duty, if pleasure, if anything that is right shall call you to foreign lands, we will protect you there?" And so it comes about that wherever the flag of our nation floats, men who can claim American citizenship claim the protection of that flag, and they never claim it in vain. A story is told something like this: In a certain land, foreign to both England and America, the English and the American ministers were there at the court, and it seems that some man had been convicted, and the English and the American ministers believed that the man ought not to be punished, that there was something wrong in the convicting of this man—that he was not guilty; but the government had condemned him to death. The day came when he was to be executed. The English and American ministers had labored long to have his pardon granted, or something that in some way the punishment might not be inflicted, but all in vain. The prisoner was led out to the place of execution. The officers were all ready to do the deed and put the man to death;

and when it was almost time for the execution to take place—and yet these ministers of England and America had not succeeded in securing the pardon of this man, the English minister, taking the flag of England, went up to the condemned man and wrapped the flag around him, and said, "Who shoots that man shoots England's flag, and England is behind her flag." The American minister, unfolding the stars and stripes, went up to the condemned man and wrapped the stars and stripes around him, saying, "Who shoots that flag must answer to the United States of America for the deed." And the man was saved. All over this great world, wherever God's children are found, those loyal to the Kingdom of God, God himself wraps about them that banner of divine love, and who touches that touches God, and must answer to God for his deed. I would not say that no child of God shall ever fall by the hand of an enemy. It may be; but if he falls, the angels of God are there to bear him away in triumph to his heavenly home. Christ said, "Fear not those who have power to kill the body; but fear him rather who hath power to destroy both soul and body in hell."

Now, then, God takes care of His own, as the nations of this earth take care of their citizens. And so we say that this is the Kingdom of God, that it is right to call it a kingdom, because there belongs to it the things of a kingdom.

Now, then, God sends us out into the world to conquer the world. Oh, that is why so many are afraid. Oh, they say, "Yes, that is different; you are going out to conquer the world." Yes, in the name of God. This earth is to be conquered. The Kingdom of God is to triumph on the face of the earth; and that kingdom is a kingdom of love, of righteousness of truth. And remember this, that when the Son of God came to this earth God manifest in the flesh, Jesus of Nazareth, His coming was announced by the angels of heaven, when they sang, "Peace on earth, good will to men." Oh! that angelic choir, singing that wonderful song of love, of peace, of good will. And see how the history of the Kingdom of God bears out that wonderful song which ushered in the coming of our Lord. You remember, as you are familiar with history, that when the Apostles and their converts began preaching the new way, persecution arose at once, and men were put to death for their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Secular history tells us that for three centuries these persecutions continued, mostly from Rome—the bitterness of the empires of this world against the loveliness, and truth, and peace of the Kingdom of heaven. But not a sword was raised by the followers of Christ in their defense. Not a sword was raised against the persecutors anywhere. Why, the historian tells us that in different parts of the Roman empire that the governors, the magistrates and the rulers in these several provinces were asked about what they were doing to put down the new way—that is, to crush out the Christians. They reported, some of them this, and some of them that; but all of them said, these are a peaceable people; they are doing