

THE POWER OF PRAYER

By John MacDuff

"And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." (John 14:13)

Blessed Jesus! it is You who has unlocked to Your people the gates of prayer. Without You they must have been shut forever. It was Your atoning merit on earth that first opened them; it is Your intercessory work in heaven that keeps them open still.

How unlimited the promise—"Whatever you shall ask!" It is the pledge of all that the needy sinner requires—all that an Omnipotent Savior can bestow! As the great Steward of the mysteries of grace, He seems to say to His faithful servants, "Take your bill, and under this, my superscription, write what you please." And then, when the blank is filled up, he further endorses each petition with the words, "I WILL do it!"

He farther encourages us to ask "in His name." In the case of an earthly petitioner there are some pleas more influential in obtaining a benefit than others. Jesus speaks of this as forming the key to the heart of God. As David loved the helpless cripple of Saul's house "for Jonathan's sake," so will the Father, by virtue of our covenant relationship to the true Jonathan (lit., "the gift of God"), delight in giving us even "exceedingly abundantly above all that we can ask or think."

Reader, do you know the blessedness of confiding your every need and every care—your every sorrow and every cross—into the ear of the Savior? He is the "Wonderful Counselor." With an exquisitely tender sympathy He can enter into the innermost depths of your need. That need may be great, but the everlasting arms are underneath it all. Think of Him now, at this moment—the great Angel of the Covenant, with the censer full of much incense, in which are placed your feeblest aspirations, your most burdened sighs—the odor-breathing cloud ascending with acceptance before the Father's throne. The answer may tarry—these your supplications may seem to be kept long on the wing, hovering around the mercy-seat. A gracious God sometimes sees it fitting thus to test the faith and patience of His people. He delights to hear the music of their importunate pleadings—to see them undeterred by difficulties—unrepelled by apparent forgetfulness and neglect. But He will come at last—the pent-up fountain of love and mercy will at length burst out—the soothing accents will in His own good time be heard, "Be it unto you according to your word!"

Soldier of Christ! with all your other armor, do not forget the "All-prayer." It is that which keeps bright and shining "the whole armor of God." While yet out in the night of a dark world—while still camping in an enemy's country—kindle your watch-fires at the altar of incense. You must be Moses, pleading on the Mount, if you would be Joshua, victorious in the world's daily battle. Confide your cause to this waiting Redeemer. You cannot weary Him with your importunity. He delights in hearing. His Father is glorified

in giving. The memorable Bethany-utterance remains unaltered and unrepealed—"I know that You hear me always." He is still the "Prince that has power with God and prevails"—still promises and pleads—still He lives and loves!

"I wait for the Lord, my soul does wait; and in his word do I hope."

(Taken from "The Words of Jesus" by John MacDuff)

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