

to the store-house of God. It opens the repository of heaven's choicest blessings, and brings them down to earth. Happy is he who possesses it. He has influence at the throne of God. He can move the arm that moves the destinies of the universe.

There are many aspects of this subject upon which the Christian loves to dwell. I shall aim, however, at present, to exhibit but one of these aspects. It is the efficacy of *intercessory prayer*, and the duty of God's people in relation to it.

By intercessory prayer, is meant, the prayer of faith for the salvation of impenitent sinners; the use of this influence with God in averting the doom of those under sentence of death, and in leading them to the cross of Christ.

Christians who feel an interest in the conversion of their ungodly friends, seldom realize the amount of influence they possess at the mercy seat. They do not take God at his word. They do not believe they have power to prevail with him. Their addresses to the throne of grace demonstrate their unbelief. They ask for small things; or if they pray for greater, they have little expectation of receiving them. Their language shows it. It is the prayer that will take no denial, that prevails with God. It is the wrestling of Jacob. Jacob interceded all night with the Lord; and when the day dawned, and he was reminded that it was time for him to desist, and attend to his flocks and herds, he replied, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." He *was* blest. God said to him, "Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, (that is, one who supplants another,) but Israel, (warrior with God, as the name signifies,) for as a prince hast thou power with God, and with man, and hast prevailed."

Power with God! O, if his children believed, felt, realized this, what intercessions would they make for an ungodly world! Power with God! Did the church feel this, as they ought, the moral foundations of the world would be moved, and the kingdom of the Messiah speedily and permanently established. They do not feel it. Why is it, when God seems almost to anticipate their faith, and to go before them in bestowing his blessings? Why is it, when they know they have received immediate and signal answers to

their prayers for the impenitent? Why is it? How can they be so faithless, so skeptical, so ready to distrust God? Why, every one who will give himself the trouble to watch the phenomena of the moral world, and to inquire for their causes, must see that the intercessions of the godly man prevail with God. Unconverted men even, with all their prejudice against spiritual religion, and all their obtuseness of moral vision, are generally too observing not to notice, and too honest not to acknowledge it. It is almost self-evident. The man who is eminently pious, walks with God; and it is plain as a sunbeam, that when he speaks, God hears.

John Knox was the principal agent in introducing and disseminating the Protestant religion in Scotland. He was a holy man, and had much of the spirit of prayer. Mary, Queen of Scots, and a zealous advocate of the Catholic faith, according to her own confession, trembled for the fate of Popery in her dominions. "I am afraid of John Knox," said she. But why did she tremble? Why was she afraid of this man? Was she afraid of his rank and influence in the world? No, she knew well that he was poor, and far enough removed from what the world called greatness. Was she afraid of his fleets and his armies, and his military skill? He was no general; and except by the angels of God, he was unattended. What was she afraid of? His learning and eloquence? No. What then? what caused her to tremble and fear that that fabric of superstition would totter and fall through the influence of this humble individual? Let her answer. "I am more afraid of the *prayers* of John Knox, than of an army of a thousand men!" She, though probably a stranger to the power of godliness in the heart, was no stranger to the astonishing efficacy of prayer. She was a philosopher—a better philosopher, it would seem, than many of the professed disciples of Christ. The result showed that she had ground for her fears. Papacy could not stand against the attacks of such an engine. It fell, and its walls were never re-built in Scotland.

We wonder and complain sometimes, that our prayers for the outpouring of the Spirit and for the conversion of sinners, are not answered. But have we wrestled with God? Have we been suitably im-