

# The King's Highway.

An Advocate of Scriptural Holiness

And an Highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The Way of Holiness.—Isa. 35-8

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## THE PRAYER THAT PREVAILS.

"What things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them."—Mark 11:24.

Praying is something more than saying one's prayers. The Lord said to Ananias of Damascus, "Arise and go into the street called Straight and inquire for one Saul of Tarsus, for behold, he prayeth." Now in point of fact Saul of Tarsus had been saying prayers ever since he was born; but he had never really prayed until he discovered, at his conversion, that the name of Jesus was the countersign of prayer; as He himself had said, "I am the way; no man cometh unto the father but by me."

As prayer is the sign manual of a Christian, so faith is the infallible test of prayer.

And then the crucial test of faith is expectancy. This is our place of emphasis today. So far we have taken three steps: First, no one is a true Christian who does not pray; second, no prayer is true prayer which is not offered in faith; third, no faith is true faith which does not expect to get what it asks for.

This is briefly set forth in the words of Jesus: "What things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." The best exposition of this passage is found in the wonder-working ministry of Jesus Himself, as for example, where He said to the father of the demoniac boy, "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." (Mark 9:23), and to Mary and Martha at their brother's grave, "Said I not that if thou would believe, thou shouldst see the glory of God?" (John 11:40), and to Peter after his vain attempt to walk on the water, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" (Matt. 14:31), and to the blind man of Jericho, "According to your faith be it unto you." (Matt. 9:29).

It is obvious that what is intended here is something more than a mere belief that God is able to do thus and so. The blessing is promised to those who believe that God not only can but will do the thing that He is asked to do, and the answer to their prayer is measured out to them according to the expectancy of their faith.

I. *Observe first, the proposition thus laid down is consistent with reason or plain common sense.* The falsest proverb that ever was coined was this: "Blessed are those who expect nothing, for they shall not be disappointed." Live that way and you will die threadbare. Confidence begets confidence in every province of life. A whining beggar goes away empty-handed. "He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

If you propose to go to a certain city, having

bought your ticket, you take your seat and expect to arrive. In even so trifling affair as that there is no appreciable element of doubt or uncertainty. You are not content with knowing that the engineer is able to carry you to that city; you are comfortably sure that he will do it. Is it too much to ask of the Lord to ask of us a like confidence in Him?

*The second ground on which our proposition rests is Revelation.* The Bible is full of promises addressed to those who pray with confidence; and every one of those promises is yea and amen. Listen to this: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Mark the fullness and unreservedness of that promise; it contains not an if, nor a perhaps, nor a peradventure, but three great shalls! And as if this were not enough—as if the Lord anticipated that somebody would intimate that He scarcely meant His words to be taken literally—He straightway added, "For every one that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

Or listen to this: "If ye abide in me and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you." (John 15:7). Let us be careful how we put limitations on promises which the Lord has not fenced in. "What ye will—all things—anything—everything whatsoever." These are large words and more than a mouthful for most of us. But suppose the Lord meant them? What a draft on the exchequer of God!

Or take the promise in our text. It was given just after the withering of the barren fig tree. When the disciples "marvelled" at what had been wrought by a simple word of the Master, he said, "If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig-tree; but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, 'Be thou removed and be thou cast into the sea, it shall be done.' Do you regard that as hyperbole; that is "overshooting for effect?" There's the trouble; we are naturally disinclined to believe that the Lord means exactly what He says. Of course, it was the way of it. According to your expectation be it unto you.

III. *The third of the foundation stones of our proposition is Observation.* Lift up your eyes and see. The world is full of people who are prepared to certify not only that God has answered their prayers, but that He has answered up to the full measure of their expectation.

Are you saying, "Now that is simply preposterous." In the year 1836 a man named George Muller was greatly concerned for the neglected children of Bristol, England. He resolved to start an orphanage, but being without funds, the

question was how to support it. He said, "I will undertake the thing for the Lord and expect Him to stand behind it." Great expectations. "A Utopian dream!" Have it your own way, my friend; but the facts are against you. That was eighty-five years ago; the Bristol Orphanage is still in evidence, and meanwhile not a cent has been asked of any soul this side of heaven to support it.

The institution grew from a small beginning until five orphan houses were filled with children. It grew without "drives" or appeals. And for almost a century, thousands of children have been dependent for their daily bread on the prayers of one man who had faith enough to undertake a great thing for God and to expect great things for Him. Here is a miracle more inschutable from the world's point of view than the feeding of a lone prophet by ravens in a cleft of the hills. A miracle? Certainly. Why not? Every answer to prayer is a miracle. God as the great wonder-worker is handing out miracles to expectant people every moment of every hour of the day.

IV. *But there is a fourth ground for our proposition, to wit, Experience.* The way to discover whether the Lord is good or not is to "taste and see."

David had his ups and downs like everybody else; and tells what happened to him once as he was going through the Vale of Baca: "This poor man cried, and the Lord heard and saved him out of all his trouble." And in another place he explained by saying that his "expectation was from God."

Peter was a man of faith; but even his faith had its fainting spells. One morning he and other fishermen had come ashore after a night spent in taking nothing but water hauls, when Jesus came by. "Launch out into the deep," He said, "and let down your nets for a draught." Peter answered: "Master, we have toiled all night and taken nothing; nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net." Then came the great draught of fishes. It always comes to those who take the Master at His word. His promises can be depended on. "Not one fail-eth!" The point of weakness is not in the unwillingness of the Lord to grant our petitions to the very uttermost, but in the fact that at our best we do not half believe in Him.

Faith has value only as it unites us with God. It is like the coupler that unites the locomotive with a train of cars; there is no power in the coupler, nevertheless the train would be at a standstill without it. God is omnipotent; and when faith brings us into vital contact with Him, the power of the great Dynamo works through

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Ward Miller, May 27  
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