

killed James, the brother of John, with the edge of the sword. And because he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further, to take Peter also. Peter was therefore thrown into prison. Herod intended after Easter to bring him forth to the people. But the disciples had already proved the omnipotence of prayer, and "prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him." And what was the result? Why, when Herod would have brought him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and the keeper before the door kept the prison; suddenly the angel of the Lord entered the prison, filling it with light. He called upon Peter to arise. His chains fell off. He sprang to his feet, and followed the angel through one ward and then through another, till they came to the iron gate of the prison, which flew open before them of its own accord. They passed on together through one street, Peter all the while supposing that it was only a vision. But when the angel had left him, and he was come to himself, he hastened to the house of Mary, the mother of John, whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together praying. Peter knocked at the door of the gate. A damsel ran to hearken. She recognized the voice of Peter, and forthwith ran back to tell that Peter was actually at the gate. They told her she was mad. But when she constantly affirmed that it was even so, they said, "It is his angel," or, as we would say, "his ghost." "But Peter continued knocking, and when they had opened the door, and saw him, they were astonished." Where, now, are our philosophers with their prayer-gauges? Prayer, which has always been the secret of the church's power, brought Peter out of prison. Strong walls, and iron gates, and bolts, and bars, and dungeons, and chains, and soldiers, are no insurmountable barriers to the power of prayer.

I will now turn from the Scriptures to give a few instances of the omnipotence of prayer, taken from the lives of God's people in modern times.

On a certain occasion a messenger was sent to Luther to inform him that Melancthon was dying. He hastened to the sick-bed, and found his friend at the point of death. He bent over him in sorrow, and sobbing, gave utterance to his grief in a loud exclamation of anguish. It roused Melancthon from his stupor. He looked into the face of Luther, and said, "O Luther, is this you? Why don't you let me depart in peace?" "We cannot spare you yet, Philip," was the quick response. Turning around, he fell upon his knees, and for upwards of an hour he wrestled with God for the recovery of Melancthon. He went from his