9. *Hercules and the Waggoner.*

As a clownish fellow was driving his cart along a deep miry lane, the wheels stuck so fast in the clay, that he despaired of getting it out again; he thought himself quite unhappy and lost, so throwing himself down on the ground, implored all the Gods and Goddesses of the ancient heathenish world, for help, he prayed particularly to Hercules, to draw his cart out. „Miserable wretch," cried Hercules, „looking down from a cloud, why do not you trouble yourself, clap your own shoulders to the wheels, whip your oxen stoutly, to get it out, that is the only way to obtain my assistance, but not lying there like an idle rascal! I know you adjudge your prayers according to the season of the year, and use your Gods as servants, to help you out of every embarrassment into which your own folly and idleness brought you, meanwhile your arms are idle, and think to have done enough, to have cried and bauled out for help." With these words, the powerful God left him.

Application.

***Pray and work!** is the saying, for without working and self exertion no prayer will do a miracle. Many men reduced to poverty and necessity, by an idle and disorderly way of life, are often of the foolish opinion, that God Almighty will help them through a mere prayer, without laying their hands themselves on the work; but a sincere prayer is prosperous only to the diligent honest man, endowing him with courage and strength to steadiness. Thence it is wisely acted, to use one's own strength as much as possible and not to run wantonly into danger, then a man will not be apt to call the name of our Lord in vain, in an insensible manner.*

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