

## PRAYERS FOR RAIN

P.F. JENSEN

## "THE CHRISTIAN FAITH"

Last month was the driest April in Sydney for over 80 years. It was a reminder that, with all man's accomplishments, he is still not able to do much about the weather. Since the drought has been so bad, however, there were some suggestions about providing more water.

One newspaper columnist suggested humourously that people all over New South Wales should wash their cars. He had noticed that rain always seems to fall after he has washed his. Someone else wrote to the newspaper proposing that the Water Board should pump Sydney's waste water over the mountains to the parched countryside beyond. There was a courteous answer from the Board pointing out some of the difficulties in the scheme.

One debate that has been going on concerns the usefulness of praying for rain. Various Christian ministers have been urging their congregations to ask God to send the rain we need so badly. But is this activity any use? Isn't it just like making it rain by washing your car - a mere idle superstition? In fact isn't there a danger, as one letter to the editor has suggested, that praying for rain will prevent people from taking effective measures to relieve the drought?

Your answer to this last question depends on how much you know about the God of the Bible. That God is full of power. He has made all things, and he controls them moment by moment. What we may call 'the laws of nature' are really a way of describing how God works in the world. He has not set the world going like a machine, and then stood back from it to let it work itself. He is in full and continuous control.

God's power, according to the Bible is frustrated neither by man, nor by nature. He has the hearts of kings and princes in his hand; he supervises great migrations; he uses nations to punish other nations; at the other extreme, according to Jesus, not one sparrow is forgotten before God, and 'even the hairs of your head are all numbered'.

Naturally, therefore, we should pray for rain. It is not superstitious. Reality demands it. Indeed this present drought should be teaching us how much we owe to God. But it is not only rain that we receive from God - It is everything. Even when we achieve something by hard work, it remains the gift of God; for God upholds all things, all the time. When Jesus gets us to pray for our daily bread, he doesn't mean that we should stop working. Without his continuous power we would not even remain alive for an instant. That is why prayer and hard work are not opposed to each other. We must do all we can to alleviate drought; but we must also realise that without God all our efforts are in vain.

In time of drought, pray for rain; in times of plenty give thanks to God.



**THE CHRISTIAN FAITH**  
Is broadcast every Sunday at  
7.05 p.m. over Radio 2CH

Copies of these weekly broadcasts may  
be obtained (\$5 per year posted) by  
writing to The Christian Faith, c/o  
2CH, York Street, Sydney N.S.W. 2000

11/5/80

19/80