



The Meaning of Prayer

Harry Emerson Fosdick

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This historic book may have numerous typos and missing text. Purchasers can usually download a free scanned copy of the original book (without typos) from the publisher. Not indexed. Not illustrated. 1915 edition. Excerpt: ... CHAPTER VI Prayer and the Reign of Law DAILY READINGS First Day, Sixth Week The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament showeth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, And night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language; Their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, And their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun, Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, And rejoiceth as a strong man to run his course. His going forth is from the end of the heavens, And his circuit unto the ends of it; And there is nothing hid from the heat thereof. --Psalm 19:1-6. Consider the ease with which the Psalmist here ascribes all the activities of the heavens to the direct influence of God. The idea of natural law has not gotten between him and the Creator; whenever the sun comes up or the stars appear he feels that God is doing it. Now it may still be true, as Mr. Chesterton remarks, that each morning God says to the sun, "Get up, do it again!" but it is difficult for most people to imagine that. The sun seems to run itself by law; everything seems to run itself, so that in the modern mind this psalm is unconsciously changed until it reads, "The heavens declare the glory of law." In the weekly comment we shall consider the unreasonableness of this negation of religious faith which our modern scientific knowledge has caused in many, but in the daily readings let us note the ways in which our new information about natural law practically affects us. Does it not, as we have today suggested, seem to push God away off? The world looks like a great machine, selfrunning and self-regulating, with God a very distant Sustainer, if he is anywhere at all....



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