

**References to the War extracted from the Sermons by Rev. Lunn at the Parish Church
(The outbreak of WWII)**

September 1939

Menaced and overshadowed as we are by the black clouds of War, we can only continue in prayer and hope that even at the eleventh hour the whole world may be saved from the horrors which must inevitably bring death and destruction to millions of innocent and helpless victims of such a cruel and hellish tragedy.

October 1939

The blow, which we have dreaded so long, has now fallen upon us, and we are plunged into all the horrors and sorrows of a struggle the end of which God only knows. One thing we do know, that this is not a war upon which we have launched the resources of the whole Empire, along with our brave Allies in France, for the purpose of self aggrandisement or for the conquest of other and weaker nations, but for the rescue of a small and helpless people from the tyranny and thralldom of a foe who is as cruel as he is strong and who is as relentless as he is merciless. Of the final issues there can be no doubt, unless we have lost faith in a moral Government of the world, and ceased to believe that the Lord God Omnipotent reigns. Psalm 2 is a fine Battle cry for the hour in which we live, and its glorious affirmation of the final conquest of evil and the establishment of Truth and Justice in the earth should give us assurance and hope.

We are now called upon to take our part, and to play the man in the sacred fulfilment of our duties wherever those duties may demand our best, as well as our willing service and sacrifice. Already there are those in our Parish who have offered welcome and comfort to those mothers and bairns who have been evacuated from their own homes and separated from their loved ones. I cannot speak too warmly of the appreciation and the gratitude which the self-denying and truly Christian ministry of this national service has deserved and evoked. I pray that we may be able to show to those who are sojourning amongst us how the Christians know how to bear the burdens of each other, and so fulfil the Law of Christ. One home I visited lately has no less than eleven members now living in it, and the kind " Mother" of this suddenly increased family circle is winning the gratitude and thanks of everyone. Others I know are no less generous in their efforts to share the burdens which are now to be carried by all, and I can only say how earnestly and constantly I pray that the "grace sufficient" may be given to every burden bearer. Above all, I pray daily that we may know in some new and wonderful sense the reality of a faith that rests in the Lord, and of a hope that makes not ashamed.

The severe, but necessary restrictions under which we are carrying on compel a revision of our daily programmes and plans, and to meet the conditions under which we live we have been obliged to change the hour of Worship on the Lord's Day, so that we may not be out in the dark. I should like to make a very earnest appeal to all to do what they can to make these changed plans successful and serviceable to our Parish. I beg of you not to let the many and pressing duties which demand your attention and your time crowd out your time for prayer and fellowship with God and His people. Rather would I urge that we should make supreme efforts to take more advantage than ever we have done of every opportunity of using the means of Grace for the strengthening of our faith, and for the building up of ourselves and our Church in the fear of God, and His Day, His Word, and His Son. Now surely we are feeling the need of God if we are to win through, and to bring the present conflict to the establishing of a true and lasting peace. Some of us believe that the only lasting solution of the present world problems will be found in the Return of The Prince of Peace, and the setting up of His Reign of Righteousness and Peace and Joy in the Holy Ghost, and, if you and I are to make our contribution to the hastening on of that Day of the Lord, surely we ought to be

found joining in the sacred duty of working, watching, praying and waiting for His Advent. Meanwhile, until that Day dawns, it is of paramount importance that we should be at our best for God. The natural thing with regard to the Lord's work is for many to assume that we can let that wait until we have settled the more obvious problems of securing freedom for Poland, and justice for all. Vital and all important as this sacred duty may be, there is none the less important task which must have our unabating zeal, and our increased devotion; that is the task of spreading the Gospel among the people who are still in darkness and the shadow of death, and who have never heard the glad tidings of Salvation through a Saviour crucified for our sins, and now and for ever risen, exalted, and coming again.

November 1939

I can scarcely believe that it is a month since I issued my last, message to you through the medium of our Magazine, and yet the date of this letter compels me to realise that we are just on the threshold of another month. The last one has been full of incident and circumstances which have called for a very solemn and serious attitude of thought and heart as we enter into another month of the war and all its awful conditions. The whole face of Europe is shadowed, by the ugly spectre of plague, pestilence and famine and although we in our dear Homeland seem immune from so much of the sorrow and suffering under which other nations are groaning, we must not presume upon the goodness of our God, or delude ourselves with the foolish notion that no harm can come near us, because we are such a highly, favoured race. The insistent cry which should arrest every careless member of our Empire, is the cry of a long-suffering God who is calling loudly for a return to Him, and to His Son, and His Word. We shall only, be able to rest our cause upon Him for deliverance and victory as long as we see to it that we make His Cause ours, Righteousness exalts a Nation, but sin is a reproach to any people. We have so far comforted ourselves in our struggle with the foes that are now menacing the freedom and the welfare of the weaker nations that we are engaged in a war of justice, truth, and righteousness. So long as these are our objectives we dare to claim the help of the Lord against the mighty :forces which, in the last analysis, are arraigned against our Lord and His Christ. In this confidence we can pray and work together, seeking the aid of God and the success of our arms, and those of our brave Allies.

We have much to thank God for in the marvellous way we have been delivered from perils by land and sea and air. Oar defensive weapons have wrought a great victory again and again, and so far there has been no success achieved by the repeated assaults which have been made upon our Coasts. To our brave men of the Navy and the Air Force we owe our safety, under God's good hand, and to Him, and to them, we offer our grateful thanks and praise.

December 1939

In more than one sense the past month has been one of typical November gloom, and the happenings on the Continent as well as nearer our own clear Homeland have revealed to us all more and more the horrors and the terrors of war.

We are being shocked daily by the dreadful announcements of fresh outrages both by land and sea, and we cannot but feel a very genuine sympathy for the many sufferers who are the victims of the cruelty and tyranny of the monster of Europe. Our hearts cry out " How long, O Lord, how long? " and if our faith is sorely tested we cannot doubt the ultimate issue of the present struggle. We wrestle against the powers of darkness and we know that they are doomed to final destruction for God hath spoken, and His Word cannot fail. " Whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap." There will be a terrible harvest for those who have been sowing such seeds of hatred and jealousy as are now showing themselves in the ripening fields of Europe's blood-stained lands. We must be

brave, and patient, and faithful to the highest and the best, and so deserve the favour and the blessing of God upon our Cause, until He lead forth judgment to victory.

The Services on Remembrance Sunday, as well as on Armistice Day, will be long remembered by those who shared with us in the solemn sacred Rites of our most Holy Faith with which we marked the occasion. The local newspaper gave an account of our gatherings on the Sunday when our friends of the Baptist Church joined with us in that solemn act of devotion around the War Memorial, where we placed our humble tribute of affectionate regret and undying memory of the men who gave their lives for us in the " Great War" of 1914-1918. Let us keep their memory bright, and their sacrifice ever before us as an inspiration to worthier living, and a nobler building of the Empire for which they died.