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## EVIDENCE OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD.

*(Concluded.)*

Friend and foe alike had been advised of the events which had transpired at Joseph of Arimathea's tomb. We have seen how the news stirred the malignant enemies of Christ and made them reckless and desperate. Also the small circle of the followers of Jesus must have been profoundly moved. An episode related by Luke affords a glimpse of the excitement which had seized the disciples. It may have been past the noon hour of this eventful day when two of the disciples started for a village in the neighborhood called Emmaus. Their conversation as they were walking betrayed agitation. They spoke of the report which the women had brought, and which had been verified by Peter and John, but do not mention the fact that the Lord had appeared to Mary Magdalene and later to her companions. What happened on the way and as they turned in at Emmaus is well known. They speed back to the city with the great news that they have been privileged to see the Lord and to converse with Him. That had been the third manifestation. On entering the place where the eleven and others were gathered, they are met with the report that the Lord had meanwhile appeared also to Simon. This is the only statement which Scripture makes of the fourth appearance, if it is the fourth; for it may have occurred immediately after Peter's visit at the grave, when Cleopas and his companion were just about to start for Emmaus. Cleopas relates not only the fact of the Lord's

## THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF SIN.

(Concluded.)

But—to digress for a space—what has *modern* paganism to say on this score? Not the degraded pagans of the Kru coast, Central Brazil, or Celebes, but the heathendom of New York and London and the pantheists of Harvard, Cambridge, and Leipsic—what has the infidel world of Haeckelian science, Spinozistic philosophy, and Ritschlian theology to say in our own day and to our own generation, on the relation of Sin to the major questions of life and thought? What its leaders and representatives tell us is altogether reassuring. “Sin,” says Spencer, “is a *temporary incident* of man’s transition from a less perfect to a more perfect state.” Nero and St. Paul—we are then to conclude—were separated only by certain intermediate stages of *perfection*. In the terse language of the Frenchman: “Vice and virtue are products, like vitriol and sugar.” Maeterlinck, the “Belgian Shakespeare,” suggests that God in heaven looks down upon human faults with an indulgent smile. Our own Mrs. Eddy teaches that “there never was a moment when evil was real;” sin is one of the “mists of matter;” vice, “an illusion of the physical senses.” According to Theodore Parker, sin is merely the tripping of a child learning to walk. Hegel and Schleiermacher held that sin is a necessary stage in human development. Renan “no longer believed in the existence of sin.” Ritschl reduces guilt to a subjective illusion. Says J. Freeman Clarke: “Sin is a temporary malady to which all are liable. . . . Man is radically good and even divine.” According to Carus (Dresden), sin is a pathological phenomenon (*eine Krankheitserscheinung*); “in the light of physiolog-

ical knowledge, the notion of sin ceases to exist.”<sup>1)</sup> Mr. Clodd, in *The Story of Creation*, believes that “the moral sense or conscience is the outcome of social relations, themselves the outcome of the need of living.”<sup>2)</sup> . . . There is no fixed standard of right and wrong by which the actions of all men throughout all time are measured. . . . Unfortunately, conduct has been made to rest on *supposed* divine commands as to what men shall and shall not do — *an assumption* which serves a useful purpose as a restraint upon the brutal and ignorant.”<sup>3)</sup>

The Parsee, the Brahmin, the Taoist, the Greek and the Roman agree: There is an inner law, divinely established, immutable and eternal as Divinity itself. Modern paganism says: There is no absolute norm of right conduct; “natural law” is a fiction. The consciousness of moral guilt and a profound view of human depravity have deeply tinged ancient pagan thought: sin is inborn — *ἐμφυτος* — in man, nor can he so much as desire not to be that which he hates to be; a state of innocence must remain an idle speculation; “by nature, man is evil.” Modern ethics sees in sin merely a temporary incident in man’s evolution, an illusion of the senses, the tripping of an infant; “man is radically good and even divine.” In Aeschylus and Pindar the anger of the gods consumes the malefactor; but this, according to the modern revisers of ethical standards, was an “unfortunate assumption;” God “smiles indulgently” at sin. The Psalmist, too, says: “He that sitteth in the heavens *shall laugh*,” Ps. 2 — but not with indulgence: “the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall He speak unto them in His wrath.” He *has* spoken in His wrath. The wrath of God is already “revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness.” Even in this *unnatural* blindness of the heart the resistance of

1) *Psyche*, p. 349.

2) The familiar utilitarian doctrine of Haeckel, Spencer et omne id genus; man first began to do right because he found it advantageous to himself; morality is a product of selfishness.

3) *Story of Creation*, p. 114 sqq.

men to the truth of the Gospel<sup>4</sup>) has most terribly avenged itself; they have sinned against better light than the ancients possessed; they have "despised the riches of His goodness and forbearance and long-suffering," and their "darkness of understanding" is in exact proportion to their greater guilt.

"Have you ever heard of anyone," Socrates asks in the Platonic dialogue; "who would doubt that he who kills another unlawfully or commits some other wrong must also *suffer punishment*? No one would dare assert such a thing — neither God nor man!"<sup>5</sup>) This passage emphasizes the point of our last paragraph; it serves, at the same time, to introduce a necessary corollary of the truth (intuitively perceived), that all men are under sin — this, namely, that all sin *merits punishment*. A guilty conscience, indeed, "feels the stroke of justice before it falls;" but aside from this, natural man knows that justice *will* strike, that wrongdoing must recoil, in time, upon the head of the malefactor. Regarding the Trojan war Herodotus remarks<sup>6</sup>) that "all this, with the subsequent destruction of Troy, might be ordained by Providence to instruct mankind that the gods proportioned punishment to crimes." Clearchus is quoted by Xenophon as saying (in a letter to Tissaphernes): "However fast one may flee, I do not see how anyone can escape the anger of the gods, or into what darkness he could evade, or in what hiding-place he could find security."<sup>7</sup>) "The Divinity brings the transgressor to justice," says Menander; "both in life and in death the wicked are punished."

How swiftest vengeance waits the guilty dead;  
And for the sins men sin in realms of day,  
'Neath earth a stern judge speaks the sentence dread  
Of fate's resistless sway.<sup>8</sup>)

Two sins especially, the ancients taught, were certain to bring dire misfortune upon the transgressor: murder and perjury. In Hesiod the Furies are represented as forever guard-

4) While the heathen of old sinned against the light of *nature* only.

5) *Eutyphron*, p. 69.

6) II, 120. "No unjust person has ever escaped punishment." V, 56.

7) *Anab.* II, 5, 7.

8) Pindar, *Olymp.* II.

ing Horkos (the Oath); they wreak vengeance upon anyone—whether man *or* god—who has perjured himself. “There is a human punishment for false oaths: disgrace; and a divine punishment: destruction.”<sup>9)</sup> “No perjurer can remain hidden from the gods, nor escape their punishment.”<sup>10)</sup> In the 23d song of the Elder Edda, Loki asks the dwarf: “Tell me, Andwari, what punishment is meted out to men who swear falsely?” Andwari replies: “Heavy punishment awaits such men; he who deceives others with a false oath must suffer endlessly.”—That punishment necessarily follows sin is an axiom even among the degraded heathen of our own day. We quote from Bastian: The negroes along the Congo River make vows to their Mokissos, or fetishes. “So long as he lives in easy circumstances, he attributes this to the good-will of his fetish. But as soon as he has—intentionally or by an oversight—broken his vow, he has entered into a conflict with destiny, misfortunes come upon him, and under the load of his affliction he can only die and forget.”<sup>11)</sup> The favorite inquiry directed by the South Sea islanders to their oracles is: “*the Sin* why so-and-so is ill.”<sup>12)</sup> And on the island of Madagascar the apes are popularly believed to be men who were metamorphosed on account of their sins.<sup>13)</sup>—

All of this states only one half of our subject. In order to exhibit the *intensity* of that feeling of guilt which is an outflow of (natural) conscience, we had to appeal to the testimony of natural man, *the individual*. To demonstrate the universal *extent* of this phenomenon—in other words, to show that mankind has *always and everywhere* acknowledged the “sinfulness of sinning”—is a much simpler matter. There is a single historical fact which may stand for a thousand witnesses. We refer to the practice—universal among pagans from the dawn of history to our own day—of Sacrifice. Through all that endless variation which appears in the sacrificial customs of ancient and modern times one intention can be traced as a governing prin-

9) Cicero, *Legg.* II, 22.

10) Cited by Spiess, *Logos Spermat.*

11) *San Salvador*, p. 254.

12) Gill, *Myths and Songs*, etc.

13) Schulze, *Petishism*, p. 76.

ciple: the expiation of guilt and the propitiation of the Deity, which punishes the guilty. Reduced to its last elements, the real meaning of sacrifice has at all times been *Purification*. Sin was regarded as an impurity.<sup>14)</sup> Hence annual purificatory offerings, “as a propitiation for the sins—wittingly or unwittingly committed—of the entire year” were a general custom of antiquity.<sup>15)</sup> “The Latin word *punio*, to punish, as derived from the root ‘pu’ in Sanskrit, tells us that the Latin derivative was originally formed, not to express mere striking or torturing, but cleansing, correcting, delivering from the stain of sin. In Sanskrit many a god is implored to ‘cleanse away’ (*punihi*) the sins of men, and the substantive derived from the same stem took in later times the sense of purification and penance. Now, it is clear that the train of thought which leads from purification to penance shows us that in the very infancy of criminal justice punishment was looked upon, not simply as a retribution or revenge, but as a correction, as a removal of guilt. ‘Castigation,’ too, was originally ‘chastening,’ from *castus*, pure; and *incestum* was impurity or sin, which, according to Roman law, the priests had to make good, or punish, by a *supplicium*, a supplication or prostration before the gods.”<sup>16)</sup> The conclusion seems evident. Where tribal and national law required no punishment for some moral dereliction, man felt himself impelled, by an overpowering sense of guilt, to make amends through the sacrifice of something valuable or dear to him. The Phoenicians offered up in times of pestilence and famine their dearest children to Kronos; at their yearly festivals they sacrificed τὰ ἀγαπητὰ καὶ μονογενῆ τῶν τέκνων, as a propitiation for the sins of the nation!<sup>17)</sup> Sacrifice was punishment *self-inflicted* under a crushing sense of guilt.

No, it was not a freakish ‘will-o’-the-wisp, this light of nature which fallen mankind received, new-born in every individual, from the beneficence of God. So far as it went,—we

14) “Sin is an impurity of the soul,” says Plato, *Laws* III, 716.

15) Movers, *Die Phoenizier* I, p. 301.

16) M. Mueller, *Essays* II, p. 254.

17) Movers, l. c.

should rather say: so far as man permitted it to guide him,—it carried him not away from, but toward a true conception of his depraved state. Let us note that natural man, untouched, so far as we are able to judge, by the Old Testament revelation, held even this truth as a *commune dogma*: That divine judgment will visit the sins of one individual upon another—upon the nation. The wrath of the Furies passed by Tisamenos, says Pausanias,<sup>18)</sup> but lighted upon Autesion, his son. “The gods visit the crimes of parents upon the children,” says Euripides in a fragment (970). Dike, in Hesiod’s *Days and Works*,<sup>19)</sup> punishes nations for the misdeeds of their kings. The entire army of Nereus had to be purified (*καθαροδῆσαι*) because a number of his soldiers had “soiled their hands” (with crime).<sup>20)</sup> But why multiply instances when both the mythology and the history of the ethnic world presents few more conspicuous facts than such *expiation of foreign guilt*, and the transference of punishment from the individual to the kind? All sacerdotal institutions had for their object the protection of tribes or nations against the wrath of divinities (*ad placandos deos*) offended by the transgressions of the individual.<sup>21)</sup>

After all, men have at times more or less clearly recognized the utter futility of all this expiatory machinery. Neither priest, nor sacrifice, nor punishment, nor supplication, nor prayer, can atone for transgression of the moral law—such seems to have been the ultimate verdict of paganism in its most

18) Cited by Weleker, *op. cit.* III, p. 83.

19) v. 252 sqq.; cf. v. 240: “Often an entire city is punished for one wretch.”

20) Aelian., *Var. Hist.* VIII, 5.

21) Satisfaction by substitution is not an idea entirely foreign to the natural mind. In the *Prometheus* of Aeschylus, Hermes declares to Prometheus that he shall not be released until some god appear as a successor to his suffering, one willing to go down to Tartarus and Hades for him; Ovid bids the gods take the heart and flesh of the victim for the heart and flesh of the offerer; and Virgil says of the sacrifice: *unum pro multis dabitur caput* (*Aen.* 5, 815). Even in Homer “the shedding of the blood of the brutes is an alternative set over against the shedding of the blood of the sinner” (President Strong of Rochester Seminary).

enlightened representatives. In the *Iliad*, Athene refuses the prayers of the Trojans who had offended her; in the *Odyssey*, Agamemnon is termed *ῥήπιος*, a fool, because he tries to reinstate himself by means of sacrifice in the favor of the gods; Zeus does not accept the sacrifice of Ulysses when pursued by Poseidon's wrath. In Homer, says Naegelsbach, "the sin of men, and the retaliation of the gods are certain; forgiveness uncertain, dependent upon the passing whim and arbitrary decree of the gods." Even when Orestes had performed all prescribed rites of purification, Aeschylus represents him as haunted by the Furies into the very shrines of the gods. A Spartan, says Juvenal, had *hesitated* to return a deposit entrusted to him; but the oracle at Delphi informs him that such evil intention "must not go unpunished; he was soon exterminated with all his progeny and house, and all his wide-spreading clan"! "Such is the penalty," the poet adds, "which the mere wish to sin incurs." We may conclude with this expression of Cicero's: "There is no expiation of crimes against mankind, and impiety against the gods."<sup>22</sup> —

The words of St. Paul: "The Gentiles, which have not the Law . . . show the work of the Law written in their hearts," may be resolved into the following series of parallels and corollaries: *Natural man is able to recognize*, 1) the origin of natural law, as an outflow of the *divina ratio*; 2) the twofold primary function of conscience, as accusing and excusing; 3) the avenging power of an evil conscience; 4) the sinfulness of evil intention; 5) the depravity of man (race and individual); 6) punishment as a necessary consequence of wrongdoing; 7) the need of purification in some form, as a means of escaping punishment, either for one's own sins or those of another; 8) the futility, after all, of all human devices for the expiation of guilt.

In what, then, did the crime of paganism consist? In the "judgment of the day of wrath," why will natural man be "without excuse"? Because, —

22) *De Legg.* I, 40.



I. In spite of the "Law written in their hearts," in spite of "their conscience also bearing witness," in spite of such remarkable clarity of perception in matters concerning sin, purification from sin, and the punishment that must follow sin, men *have continued* to sin, have "all gone out of the way, and altogether become unprofitable," Rom. 3, 12. It is true that *ignorantia legis excusat nullum*; but natural man cannot even plead ignorance of the law. Moreover, we have yet to meet with the first instance of a pagan expressing contrition over a wrong committed.<sup>23)</sup> Consciousness of sin there was — *but no repentance*.

II. Instead of turning to the true God, also recognized by man (in the works of nature), when overcome by a sense of guilt and the dread of certain retribution, natural man rather attempts to rid himself of the thought of a moral God who would challenge his impurity and punish his transgressions. This is the genesis of polytheism, or heathenism in the stricter sense. The one holy will was transformed into many wills, sometimes conflicting (as in Homer), never unalterably righteous. Art proceeded to clothe these abstractions — Zeus, Athene, Hermes, etc. — with beauty; but the idea itself was further debased — the statues of the gods became an object of idolatry. Polytheism and fetishism "possessed attractions for the old Adam. A moral creator in need of no gifts, and opposed to lust and mischief, will not help a man with love-spells and malevolent 'sendings' of disease by witchcraft; will not favor one man above his neighbor; charms do not touch his omnipotence. . . . Man being what he is, man was certain to 'go a-whoring' after *practically useful* gods and fetishes. . . . For these he was sure, in the long run, to neglect his idea of the Creator; next, perhaps, to reckon him as only one among the venal rabble<sup>24)</sup> of spirits and deities."<sup>25)</sup> It was the Love of Sinning which "changed the truth of God into a lie." And this is the guilt of heathenism.

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23) Certain Babylonian "penitential" prayers must be discounted, as showing too plainly traces of Hebrew influence.

24) Venal, because their favor can be purchased.

25) Andrew Lang, *The Making of Religion*, p. 281.