

## The Pardonable Sin.

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CHRIST died for men—for all men. Christ is now the Lord of men—of all men. It was apart from any consent of ours that God laid on Him the iniquity of us all. No consent of ours is necessary to give Him authority over us all. The authority was given to Him by the Father—"all authority . . . in heaven and on earth." It does not lie within a man's choice whether he will live under a law austere just, which condemns men to death for every transgression, or under a Divine Prince who has died for the sins of His subjects. Christ reigns, not by popular election, but by Divine right. And so we do not send missionaries to found the kingdom of God in heathen lands, but to tell heathen men that God Himself has already founded it, and that, according to His thought and purpose, they all belong to it.

Our gospel, therefore, is something more than the history of the appearance of the Son of God among men in a remote age; something more than the recitation and exposition of His teaching; something more than the repetition of the story of His miracles of pity; something more even than an account of His sufferings and death for the sins of the human race. We tell men that He is living still—the very Christ that was born at Bethlehem, that walked through the corn-fields of Samaria and Galilee, healed the sick, forgave the sinful, died on the Cross; that they need not look back with inconsolable regret upon those distant years, or wish that they had seen His gracious form and listened to His gracious voice, and been able to appeal to His mercy and His power; for He is living still, and His power is unspent—it is immeasurably augmented; His compassions fail not, His mercy endureth for ever. When He was here, men knew Him in the weakness of the flesh; now they may know Him in the power of God. Then He appeared in the form of a servant, and He lived among the people of one considerable country; now He is King of men in all lands.

And if they ask us—as they have sometimes asked us—why God permitted generation after

generation of their fathers to live and die without the knowledge of this great salvation, we must confess, with sorrow and shame, that God had charged *us* and *our* fathers to make the salvation known to them; that in the generosity of His trust in us He had called us to share with Himself the blessedness and glory of filling the whole world with the light of the Christian gospel, but that we and our fathers had betrayed His confidence. But we must tell them, too, that the infinite mercy was not to be wholly baffled and defeated by our unfaithfulness.

It was an evil thing that whole generations should have been born, and should have passed away without knowing that the Son of the Eternal had died for them, and that He was their Saviour and Lord; but for their sins, too, though they knew it not, Christ died; they, too, though they knew it not, were born under the authority and shelter of His kingdom. The condemnation for their want of faith in Him rests, not upon them, but upon us, and upon all those who in past ages have not cared for the nations living and dying in the great darkness. But even in that darkness there was light, and the light came from Him who lighteth every man. *We* had forgotten them—Christ had not. The light was dim; it had to struggle through dense clouds stretching from horizon to horizon, with hardly a rift through which a glimpse could be caught of distant stars; but for those in every land who love the light, and come to it, there is infinite hope; for Christ died for all men—heathen, Mohammedan, and Christian—and He is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world. "This is the condemnation," not that men lived in darkness and died in darkness, but that when the light reached them, however dim the light may have been, they "loved the darkness rather than the light, for their works were evil." It may be—who can tell?—that among these successive generations on whom the awful gloom has rested, there were many by whom the light which reached them was received with joy, and with deep affection. It is not safe to infer from their outward conformity to the traditions

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and manners of their countrymen that they had not discovered the rude elements of a diviner faith, and endeavoured to obey a diviner rule of life. Among ourselves outward conformity to nobler traditions is no sure evidence that a man is really living in God. He may inwardly resent the restraints of Christian morality while he submits to them; and while hotly zealous for the form of sound words which is accepted by his Church and his party, and which he has inherited from his fathers, the great truths of a lofty creed may for him be corrupted and degraded into the worst falsehoods by the power of an evil heart. And, on the other hand, it may be—God only knows—but it may be that there have been some, it may be that there have been many, for whom the coarsest

and the most brutal forms of faith have been touched by light from the upper heavens; some, perhaps many, who have loved and practised gracious and gentle virtues, which the temper of their countrymen permitted, though it did not encourage. When God's lost children, for whom Christ died, are feeling after their Father in the darkness, if haply they may find Him, He knows it; and, for my part, I believe that while they are yet "afar off," He will run to meet them, and will bring them safely home. But these are speculations. Our duty is clear. It is for us who have the larger knowledge to make it the common and actual possession of all nations. We are faithless to God and cruel to men if the duty is neglected.

### Notes on the Lord's Prayer.

Τὸν ἐπιούσιον.

IN the Rev. Frederic Chase's recent book, entitled *The Lord's Prayer in the Early Church* (in *Texts and Studies*, vol. i. No. 3, Cambridge, 1891), the above-mentioned expression is, as we might expect, fully discussed, and the following new explanation is propounded (p. 45):—"There seems to be evidence that considerable latitude was allowed as to the insertion in the synagogue prayers of petitions suitable to the season or the day. At least, equal freedom would be claimed in the assemblies of the 'brethren.' Thus it is no violently improbable hypothesis if we suppose that when the Lord's Prayer was used in the morning or in the evening prayers of the Hebrew 'brethren,' and of the Hellenistic 'brethren,' at first at Jerusalem, and later in Northern Syria, it became customary to adapt the one clause which speaks of time to the particular hour of prayer. Among the Hebrew and Syrian Christians the phrase as it stood, *our bread of the day*, would be appropriate for the morning prayer. When, however, the prayer was used in the evening, a slight adaptation would be necessary; and such an adaption we actually find in the word *Mahar*, which Jerome quotes from 'the Gospel according to the Hebrews.' The case of the Hellenistic 'brethren' was different. Here there was need of translation, and the

requirements both of translation and adaptation were satisfied when, ἡ ἐπιούσα being adopted in the place of *γῶμο*, the word ἐπιούσιος was coined to represent *diyomo*. This rendering would have a double advantage. It would be appropriate when the prayer was used in the morning—*our bread for the coming day*; it would be equally appropriate in the evening. Thus the petition would assume this form—τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον δὸς ἡμῖν." It is, according to my opinion, difficult to follow the hypothesis of Mr. Chase. In the first place, we know nothing, as Mr. Chase states himself, of the relations between the Hebrew and the Hellenistic 'brethren.' Further, we have no mention of the Lord's Prayer having been recited morning and evening. Finally, if a prayer is rendered into another language for devotional purposes, it would at first be merely translated literally, without any adaptations whatever. We do not lay much stress upon the omission of the word *σήμερον*. Whether the Lord's Prayer was originally in Hebrew or Aramaic we shall not discuss at present, but certain it is that it was composed in one of these two dialects, the word *מחר* occurring in Hebrew and in Aramaic. The word being used as an adjective in the expression *מחר ביום* (Prov. xxvii. 1) 'of to-morrow,' in German, 'der morgige Tag,' and much more so in the form of *מחרת*, it fully represents the expression τὸν ἐπιούσιον, 'the coming day.' The Hebrew adherents of Jesus certainly petitioned for the