

Where Moses Read the Ten Commandments



MORE than 5,000 years ago there were gathered at the command of Moses, on the plains of Assemblage in the valley of Mount Sinai, all of the children of Israel to listen to the reading of the laws that were revealed to Moses during the "forty days and forty nights" he spent in the midst of a cloud communing with the God of the "chosen people."

Since that momentous and epoch-making event nations have risen to decay and oblivion. Unpeopled plains have been converted into hives of industry, and hives of industry have reverted back to unpeopled plains. New lands have been discovered and peopled and new seas have been navigated and charted. Everywhere progress has changed the physical condition of the people. Everywhere progress has changed the historical and geographical importance of nations and countries. Here, alone, in the Mount Sinai Valley, where the nation that gave us the Savior first sprang into prominence, progress has stood still. Surrounded by the peaks of the "Forty Martyrs," all is hushed and still on the plain where once the hum of thousands of voices was heard, and where the valley rang with the resounding march of the hosts of Israel.

On the peak of Ras-es-Safsafah, the cross, the symbol of Christianity, has been planted on the very spot upon which Moses, the great law giver and leader of the Jews, stood and gave to his people the ten commandments, the basis of all religious beliefs and the foundation of all law, moral and civil. Now unpeopled and deserted, the very loneliness of the place is awe-inspiring, and the "silence of the tomb" is not more impressive than the "veil of silence" that envelops Ras-es-Safsafah and its surroundings.

The mount on which God is said to have revealed himself to Moses is situated in the southern half of the so-called peninsula of Sinai, projecting into the northern extremity of the Red sea, between the Gulf of Suez on the west and the Gulf of Akabah on the east. This part of the peninsula consists of a mass of granite and porphyry mountains which may be divided into three groups, a northwestern, reaching in Jebel Serhal a height of 6,712 feet; a central, including Jebel Musa (Mount of Moses), 7,363 feet, and Jebel Katerin, 8,537 feet; and an eastern and southern, whose highest peak is Jebel Umm Shomer, 8,449 feet. Whether the Biblical Sinai was Jebel Umm Shomer or Jebel Musa was long disputed by leading authorities. The former was advocated by Eusebius, Jerome, Cosmas Indicopleustes, and in more modern times by Lepsius and Ebers. Jebel Musa, however, is preferred by most authorities, and is favored by tradition (which dates, however, only from Christian times), indicated by the name "Mountain of Moses," and the erection of a monastery upon it which goes back to the days of Justinian. The northern peak of Jebel Musa, known as Ras-es-Safsafah (6,540 feet), meets the conditions required, since there is an open space at its base sufficient to accommodate a large encampment.

Standing on the lofty summit of Mount Sinai, what thoughts and visions are conjured up as one contemplates that there on the vast plain of Assemblage that stretches before the eye hundreds of feet below, fifty centuries ago, the commandments were delivered to the assembled children of Israel.

Excepting for the Mount Sinai monastery, which from these heights looks like a little toy fort built of blocks, the region is still and hushed, and almost deserted. The massive walls of the monastery raised by the peace-loving and God-fearing monks under Justinian in 527 A. D.—as a protection against the marauding bands of Bedouins that infested that part of the country when the wealth of an empire was possessed by the builders and occupants of the monastery—are in the same condition as when built 1,500 years ago. Today, however, the Christian world keeps a watchful eye over this mountain monastery and its contents, and the Bedouins, knowing this to be the fact, keep on friendly as well as visiting terms with the monks.

In the monastery are stored the priceless books narrating the history of Christianity in the tongue of every Christian nation. Slowly the brotherhood of Mount Sinai monks are dying out, there being but twenty or twenty-five at the present time. The life and the pay—not enough to buy tobacco—are not sufficient inducement for young recruits to join the forces that year by year are growing smaller. In the course of a few years the monastery will remain but a memory to remind one of the greatness of its founder, Justinian.

Looking northwest from Jebel Musa to Wadi el

Loja the traveler who for days has been wearied by the sight of nothing else but the monotonous blue of the burning sky and the dreary desert all about him is exhilarated, pleased and rested by the sight of those beautiful cypress trees with their cool, dark foliage down in the wadi—the Arabic name for hollow or valley. One can scarcely imagine anything more dreary than the valley where these trees raise their heads above the rock-bound hollow in the desert. They stand in all their majesty in the gardens of the monastery of the Sinaitic monks on St. Catherine, one of the mountains of the range called the "Forty Martyrs," and great pride is taken by these men of God in these trees, which for a thousand years have broken the monotony of the desert waste and have cast their welcome shade wherein the weary traveler and the travel-stained caravan may rest and take shelter.

For more than a year the Israelites were encamped in the valley of Sinai when they again took up their wanderings in search of the promised land. Through Asia Minor they proceeded to the land of Canaan, their great leader, Moses, dying as they came in sight of the country which God had promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

One of the most important places in Asia Minor, on the road from Constantinople to Konia, is the ancient town of Afum Kara-Hissar, whose extraordinary citadel, rising 800 feet in its very center, was the Byzantine fortress of Aeronous, where in 730 A. D. the Arabs, under the leadership of Sidel Battel el Ghazi, were defeated by the Turks in its very shadow. To get a view of this most picturesque town a climb up the stairway cut in the rock of the citadel brings one to the very summit where there still remain the mediaeval Turkish fortifications.

Like all other towns in Asia Minor, Afum Kara-Hissar is built of mud bricks. Its streets run in every direction of the compass. Although the language spoken there is Turkish, there is a large Armenian population. It is as dirty a place as one can imagine. Overrun with half-starved, howling dogs in the day, the night is made hideous by their mad attempts to clean up the refuse thrown in the streets. It is a good place to be avoided by the fastidious. The town boasts of a fine bazaar, churches for the Armenians and mosques for the Turks, as well as schools for both classes. The Armenians have made a commendable effort to make their part of the town inhabitable and sanitary.

The story of the birth and infancy of the founder and first legislator of the Israelite nation is one of the treasured gems of Hebrew literature. He was of the tribe of Levi, and his mother, Jochebed (his father's name was Amram), hid him three months in defiance of the edict of Pharaoh, who, to prevent the growth of his Hebrew slave population, had ordered all their male children to be put to death at birth. As the danger of discovery became great the infant was placed in an ark on the Nile, was found and adopted by the daughter of Pharaoh, and was brought up as an Egyptian prince. But his heart was with his enslaved brethren, and

INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

(By F. O. SELLERS, Director of Evening Department, The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.)

LESSON FOR JANUARY 19

MAN'S FIRST SIN.

LESSON TEXT—Genesis 3:1-12, 2-4. GOLDEN TEXT—"Every one that committeth sin is the bond servant of sin." John 8:34 R. V.

There are four natural divisions to this chapter in Genesis: I. The Temptation vv. 1-5; II. The Fall, vv. 6, 7; III. The Trial, vv. 8-13; IV. The Sentence vv. 14-24.

I. The Temptation vv. 1-5. Environment certainly did not cause our parents in the garden, to fall. How long after the creation of man this event occurred no one knows. Was it a real serpent? Why not? Did not Adam name all the animals? It is no stretch of imagination to believe the tradition that he conversed with them till driven from the garden. True Milton and not Genesis says this was Satan, yet Milton had Scripture authority, Rev. 12:9. We are also taught that Satan can assume disguises, 2 Cor. 11:14, etc.

The point of attack was to question the word of God; this is always the open doorway to all sin. False theology always leads in the end to false conduct. God had forbidden to eat of but one tree, chapter 2:17; but here Satan takes a partial truth to make a lie. "Ye shall not eat of the fruit of all the trees," v. 1 (R. V.). Eve did what Jesus did when he was tempted, replied with the words of God vv. 2 and 3. But though she saw through Satan's misrepresentation, she made the colossal mistake of parleying. Gaining that much ground Satan goes a step further. It is not death she need be fearful of; God would rather prevent her becoming like himself hence the prohibition not to partake of the fruit of the tree.

Eve's Mistake.

"Your eyes shall be opened . . . the woman saw." Human curiosity and a wrong ambition for a clearer knowledge have ever been fruitful sources of failure. Eve made the mistake of adding to God's words (2:17) and of allowing herself to see the one prohibition of the garden rather than the myriads of privileges.

II. The Fall, vv. 6, 7. The next step was but the entering wedge. The appeal was to the eyes, "it was a delight to the eyes" v. 6 R. V., "she took of it," see 1 John 2:16. When God gave command not to eat, he knew the danger of touching, 2 Cor. 6:17. There was of course a possible escape, 1 Cor. 10:13, even yet, but scarcely so. Eve had gone too far, hence she, and then Adam partook. The result was death (v. 19 and Rom. 5:12-14), but not immediate death. That sentence was carried out when Adam died. "In that day" rather, in his day, just as we speak of the days of Lincoln at Washington.

But physical death was not all. Death means separation. Adam and Eve were separated from God because of this disobedience. Death in every sense is the result of sin, Rom. 6:23 and came upon the entire race because of the sin of one man, Rom. 5:12 R. V. But Christ the second Adam brought back life 1 Cor. 15:22.

Adam's Fault.

Adam's fault was that he listened to his wife's persuasion (v. 17). Their desire for a present advantage, "become like God," overcame the fear of a future displeasure and illustrates the Hebrew word for sin, "missing the mark." Immediately their eyes were opened. What they saw now was not "desirable to look upon" and they made themselves girdles from the leaves of the fig trees. Man has ever since been seeking to cover his own shame.

III. The Trial vv. 8-13. Commit iniquity and human nature seeks concealment. Innocence never seeks cover. Sin makes cowards of us all. As the cool of the day approaches God walks in the garden. Of course he misses Adam and calls "Where art thou?" From that day on his call has resounded but man heeds not the call. Sometimes the call comes in the cool quiet of the evening and sometimes the fierce glare of the tempests of life. Let us like Adam's answer. There is, however, no joy now in Adam's response v. 10, the joy of life is all gone once we yield to sin. Adam's confession is worthy of study e. g., that his fear arose from his nakedness. When will man realize that in the sight of God they are naked, and that no cloak of self righteousness, nor any other garment of man's philanthropy can cover his sin. Notice how each sought to pass responsibility on to another, Rom. 14:12. God, however, drew from each a statement of their own personal participation in this entire affair and judged each accordingly, Rom. 14:10.

IV. The Sentence vv. 14-24. Adam sought to throw the blame upon Eve and indirectly upon God who had given him Eve. No excuse but seeks to evade responsibility. We see, however, in the words of this section three great facts presented. First, the relation between the human race and the race of serpents. Everything that is evil, repulsive and vile is summarized in that phrase "that old serpent" Rev. 12:9. The trickiness of a serpent, its venom, its noiselessness, its resort to dark places, and man's natural instinct to kill a snake, all put together, is but a summary of the curse as recorded in verses 14 and 15.

Second, the everlasting conflict between man and the powers of evil. One reason we know this garden story is true is that it squares with our every day experience. It is as true to life as the laws of mathematics. The power of sin, its appeal to pride, lust, to ambition, to the pleasure of the eye, to any and all of the emotions, and the counter pull of an outraged conscience are too vivid a reality in our lives to be denied. And lastly there is the prophesy of one who should conquer this power and bring all things subject to himself.

PROMINENT PEOPLE

THIS SENATOR AVERSE TO ARBITRATION



In stating his position regarding the Panama Canal situation, Senator James O'Gorman, of New York, said: "The canal is an American canal, constructed by American engineers through the liberal appropriation of funds by the American congress, and, above all, it is constructed upon American territory, and I am amazed that anybody should have the hardihood to contend that it should not be administered by American law.

"We should not lose sight of the fact that even if we were willing to submit this domestic question to an arbitral court it would be impossible to find anywhere an impartial tribunal to try it.

"Nominally, the case as it stands is one between the United States and Great Britain; as a matter of fact, the controversy raised by Great Britain would be one between the shipping interests of the United States and the shipping of the entire world.

"Every nation in the world, certainly every maritime nation, would be as much interested as Great Britain herself to uphold the British contention. Can any one doubt what the result of arbitration would be under such conditions? An arbitral court made up of representatives from any civilized country that might be suggested would be prejudiced against the United States, and that does not fit in well with the American sense of fairness in dealing with a question that is in controversy.

"The case would be prejudged."

MAY RECALL HAAKON, KING OF NORWAY

According to common gossip in the courts of Europe, King Haakon of Norway is rapidly losing favor. And judged by the same source of information, it seems apparent he will soon be discouraged by the Storting into giving up his throne.

Just after Haakon left Norway early in December, with Queen Maud and Prince Olaf, for London, to do their Christmas shopping, the Republican party introduced a bill into the Storting abolishing all decorations. This bill is certain to be passed, and as the power to confer decorations is the only privilege enjoyed by the king without securing the sanction of his ministers, the force of the intended legislative attack is obvious.

Almost immediately prior to the introduction of the bill Haakon conferred the grand cross of St. Olaf on retiring Minister Thorne.

Another factor emanates from the charge made that the king and queen have hoarded their allowance for the six years they have reigned in order to spend it on Appleton house, Sandringham, which was a wedding gift from the queen's father, the late King Edward of England. The royal couple of Norway spend much of their time there and this is disapproved by their subjects, who have frequently complained that the pair buy most of their Christmas things in London markets.

One can gain an idea of Haakon's expenditures on himself from the cost of his clothing, which does not exceed \$1,250 a year.

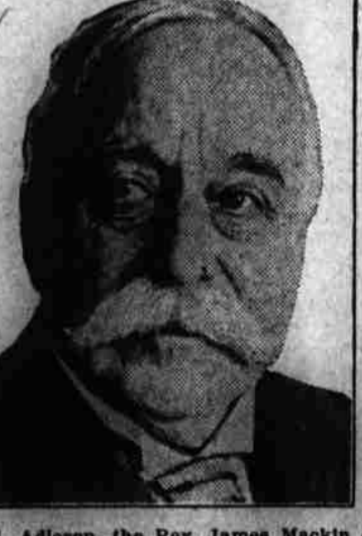
Queen Maud would shed no tears over the voluntary loss of the throne. She was the second daughter of Edward, and the English climate suits her; that of Norway does not, for her health is impaired during the periods she remains in Norway.

Another sidelight on her desires is exposed by her refusal to learn the Norse language.

King Haakon would have no regrets.



DEWEY RECOMMENDS HORSEBACK RIDING



Admiral Dewey celebrated his 76th birthday on December 26, in a quiet way, working a little in the forenoon, riding out for an airing later, and dining with a few friends in the evening.

"I feel like an ensign," said Mr. Dewey to friends. He looked as healthy and happy as a man just out of college.

"I never felt any better in my life than I feel today," added the admiral. "Two things, horseback riding and keeping away from banquets, have helped me. To be of a good old family of people who live to ripe old ages helps one to grow old gracefully and keep in vigorous health."

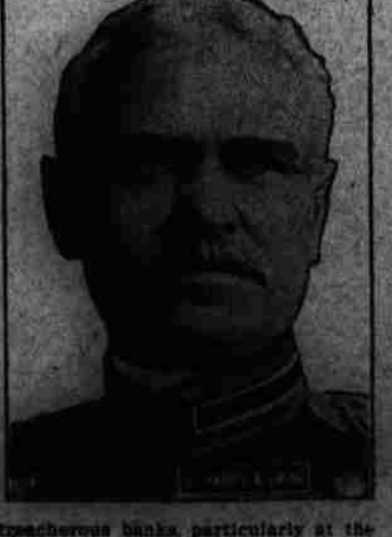
Admiral Dewey went to his office to work during the day, but his callers were so numerous that he had to give it up. Among his visitors were Rear Admirals Barker, Mason, Taming, Fletcher, Vreeland and Cone, Surgeon General Stokes, Gen. John S. Spencer, S. Woods, Commanders Victor Blue, W. D. McDougall and H. J. Ziegler.

Admiral Dewey was born in Montpelier, Vt., in 1837.

"I should say," he declared today, "that any man who begins to ride horseback early and continues with it throughout his early years will find in the end that he has invested in a form of physical exercise that will be a great asset to him in his later years. Driving is splendid, too. Getting lots of it is the principal thing. I learned to ride early in my own state of Vermont. I don't know how early, but I have kept on with that exercise and it has been a great benefit to me.

"I remember one day riding with George Bancroft, the historian. He was 80 years old at the time. I asked him to what he ascribed his perfect physical condition at that time and he pointed to his horse for answer."

NEW CIVIL GOVERNOR OF CANAL ZONE



President Taft has tendered to Col. G. W. Goethals, U. S. A., chief engineer of the Panama canal, and the colonel has accepted, the post of civil governor of the canal zone.

The change of government on the isthmus will take place probably in the spring. Colonel Goethals will serve as civil governor until the canal is formally opened on January 1, 1915.

The first vessel will be sent through the canal, barring the unforeseen, Sept. 25, 1915, on the four hundredth anniversary of the discovery of the Pacific. From then until the formal opening of the canal will be operated as a "sample" for training of the operating force, the getting of everything in final shape, etc.

The canal, according to Colonel Goethals, is now more than 75 per cent completed, and July 1 next will see it ready for the turning in of the water. It is apprehended that the entrance and presence of the water may cause some further slides of the treacherous banks, particularly at the Culebra cut, but the expectation is that the dredges can take care of the material thus deposited in the big ditch.

Colonel Goethals intends, when the canal is a-going, to retire from the government service and settle in New York as a consulting engineer, with the idea of making some money for his family. Meantime President Taft has asked congress to reward the colonel's work on the isthmus by promoting him to be a major-general in the army.

MAY NOT BE FAULT OF WORLD

Man Who Has No Friends Should Find Out if the World is Not Really to Blame.

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BEAR WAS HIS INDIAN WIFE.

Where the Hunter Shot Her is Now Called Bear's House.

Along one of the branches of the Cheyenne river in South Dakota there stands a hill called Matoti, or Bear's House. Tradition tells this Indian legend about it:

Once upon a time an Indian hunter was out on the chase. He wandered for many a day through forest and plain, over hill and dale, till he finally came to a spot where Bear's House now is. Here he hunted for a while until one day he met a beautiful Indian woman.

As soon as he saw her he wanted to marry her. Long and hard was the wooing, for the Indian woman was unwilling to marry the stranger. At last she consented, but she made the stranger promise that he would never in the future hunt or kill the bear. This animal was her totem, sacred to her and an object of her worship. The hunter faithfully promised to obey her wishes and to hunt all other animals and leave the bear unharmed. Then they were married and lived on in happiness and contentment for many a day.

Once it happened that the hunter started on the chase. Early he went and roamed all through the neighboring forest without killing a single thing. At last he became weary and tired from the chase and resolved to return to his wigwam. As he was approaching his home he saw in the dusky twilight the dark and shaggy form of a huge bear making straight for the wigwam.

"Now my wife will be lost," he thought, "for if the bear reaches there before me he will surely kill her."

Doubt at first stayed his hand, for he remembered his marriage vow. But fear and anxiety overcame his doubts. He raised his bow to his shoulder and aimed at the animal. One arrow sent straight to the heart laid the animal low. When the Indian came near he saw instead of the bear the lifeless form of his wife. The hill where they lived is still called the Bear's House, or Matoti Hill.

Not for Publication.

"Of course, you have some convictions in matters of public concern."

"Mebbe," replied Farmer Cottosel.

"Well, why don't you come out and express them?"

"I don't. We've got boarders from all political parties."—Washington Star.

aged some nine years, who was in court to exhibit his battered condition.

Before imposing sentence his honor asked the woman whether she had anything to say.

"Kin I ask yo' honah a question?" inquired the prisoner.

"Go ahead," said the judge, and the courtroom listened.

"Well, then, yo' honah, I'd like to ask yo' whether yo' was ever the parent of a perfectly white child?"—Burlington News.

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