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Our Pulpit.

The Story of Moses.

No.10

SINA!

SERMON PREACHED BY

REV. A. J. MOWATT.

In St. Paul's Church, Fredericton, Sunday evening March 10th. 1889. "And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended

upon it in fire."—Exodus XIX. 18. Tonight we are to tell the story of Moses' life and labors while at Sinai, stretching over almost a year, lacking only a few days. It was a busy eventful year, a year into which was crowded so much of life and effort, a year too of glorious spiritual experiences to himself as well as to the people, a year of close communion with God, a year of planning and organization, a year of law-giving and church-building, a year the results of which reach down to our own time and indeed to all time. Men sometimes live years and years, two-Velvet Oil, for Oiling and Blacking thirds or three-fourths of a life-time perhaps, and they seem to do so little for themselves or others; and then there comes a year that blossoms out and ripens into a harvest of glorious results, a year that amply repays them for all LOTTIMER'S SHOE STORE | the years of seeming emptiness. Such was the year that came to Moses at Sinai. It was worth his while to have lived four score years for that one year, so full was it of all that was good and glorious.

I. THE SCENE OF HIS LABORS,

ed today Er-rahah, the Rest. It is and every face is toward the summit. about a mile wide, and two miles long. that Ras Sufsafeh is the Mount of God, The Books of Livy Hall's Book Store | the true Sinai. It stands on the north The Books of Demosthenes. . Hall's Book S | side of the plain, and overlooks it.

2000 feet above the plain, but it is in to view in the thick darkness. great mountains piled up in the wildest | die." and top of Ras Sufsafeb, and even far ing up of sacrifices. in among the recesses of the mountains.

many centuries ago. I can see the peo- upon the Mount for a week. ple of Israel filing in by the wadies of leaving a great open space in the forethe scene of Moses' labors at Sinai.

II. THE GIVING OF THE LAW.

the month Sir n. c responding to our on the Mount, and Joshua awaits his

to hear what the Lord will say to His nor the people. people. He climbs by the rugged ravine up which struggles the tourist today. Near perhaps where burned the bush

say: "All that the Lord hath spoken we

Once more Moses climbs to the sacred audience-chamber of the Most High with Jehovah will descend upon Mount Sinai, and speak to him in the hearing of all the people so that they may understand the authority exercised by their leader, and accept him as the chosen mouthpiece of the Lord. He is therefore sent glorious manifestation of His presence and power. He is to set bounds and joyous inaugural festival. sentinels all around the mount, so that no one may approach the mountain, for so easily turn back to idolatry. You it is death to man or beast to do so. wonder that right there before the These instructions he faithfully carries Mount, where Jehovah Himself in out. The people purify themselves and thunder-tones had positively prohibited prepare to meet with God.

lovely June day, and the people are a calf as their god, and bowed down beearly astir. It is the sixth of Sivan, the fore it. But we must remember that in day afterwards known as the day of Egypt they had grown up in the midst Pentecost, most likely the Sabbath. of idolatry, animal worship, and it was Picture to yourself, my hearer, a plain, The people put on their best attire, and so easy for them to give way to it. almost level, with a scarcely perceptible assemble in the open space before the inclination toward the north. This mount. They are reverent, and what a wadies. It is completely shut in on all for His people to draw near to hear.

Before the plain towers up in his awful awful blackness that envelops the whole mit it. isolation Ras Sufsafeh. This mountain | mountain-top, and out of the black cloud-The Books of Virgir..... Hall's Book Store is not as high as Mount Serbal, nor Jebel folds shoot lightnings and bellow thun-Books of Cicero..... Hall's Book Store Musa, nor St. Katharine, but it has a ders, and a trumpet seems to peal loudlonely grandeur they have not, and all er and louder. The mountain and plain who have been there are of one mind rock to and fro, and men feel as if the judgment of the GREAT DAY has come. They stand aghast with terror, listening to The plain is a sort of amphitheatre, commanding him to come up. Every

keeping with the grand proportions of Soon however he returns to charge the temple. Behind this stupendous the people anew not to venture within people. bema rise Jebel Musa and St. Katharine | the bounds. And now the Lord speaks 6000 feet higher. By steep rugged to the people, uttering the precepts that stone steps today as in Moses' day you have become the basis of all civil and may climb, but not without both danger | moral law throughout the civilized world, and difficulty, to an area on the top of and that we speak of as the TEN COMperhaps twenty feet square. This is MANDMENTS. The people are so terria sort of dome or peak thirty or forty | fied that they retire to the far side of

confusion. At your feet dotted with Moses again enters the thick darktamarisk bushes stretches the plain, and ness, and returns with another portion unseemly exhibition of temper. But gently rising till it comes to the moun- of the law. They give their solemn astain slopes on the far side. Every part | sent, and the covenant is ratified by the of the plain is visible from the shoulders | building of twelve altars, and the offer- afterwards Moses speaks of what he did

has observed—"no spot in the world can All these representatives of the nation idolatry. be pointed out which combines in a more had some view of God. They saw His

s. Cloth, full gilt, only \$1.00,

b mail, sealed. Illustrative samples free to all people. Over the mountain hangs the is to build. The pattern of it is shown Moses. Next day he brought the enormity of their sin before the people. cloud so bright and so dark. Such is him in all its multifarious parts and enormity of their sin before the people, particulars, even to the pins and loops. and told them he would go up to God And the Ten Commandments are writ- and learn what He would do about it.

June, when Israel arrives before Smai. return and a lonely wait it must have The next day Moses ascends the Mount been, for he was neither with Moses

111. THE GOLDEN CALF.

In the meanwhile let us see what is Jehovah again addresses him, giving going on in the plain below. The terhim full instructions as to what he is to rible thunder-cloud, with its blackness, and terrors, and voices, and pealing He returns to the people with his trumpet-tones, has been litted from the message. He assembles the elders and awful brow of Ras Sifsafeh, and the others, and in the name of Jehovah, his mountain stands there silent, and cold, God and theirs, he makes a covenant, and mysterious. The people's religious binding them to be the Lord's, and feelings have been deeply stirred, and basing the demand for such service on they want to worship, they want to do their deliverance from Egypt. He something. But Moses is away, they wants them to be for Him specially as a know not where, away perhaps never to 7.00 A. M.—Express for St. John, and people, for Him as no other people were. come back. So they come to Aaron, 8.45, A. M.—Express for Fredericton Junction They hear the covenant and its condi- and they urge him to make them gods tions, and with a voice that reverberates to go before them. Aaron knows the throughout the mountain gorges, they temper of the people, and he yields to their entreaties and threats. He asks their entreaties and threats. He asks ston and points north. for their gold, and they give him their 12.50 P. M. — For Fredericton Junction, St jewels freely. Aaron knows something of casting; so he makes a rude calf. the covenant ratified on the part of the shaped mould into which he pours the nation. He is then informed that liquid gold, and afterwards he helps its shape and appearance with a graving tool. Some think it was wood, or some base metal, and then plated over with gold. Gold-plating was well understood, and especially on wood. At all 6. 30P. M. -Express from St. John, and interevents, he succeeds in making an idol back to prepare the people for this after the manner of the idols the people were used to in Egypt, and they hold a 6.50, A M .- Mixed for Woodstock, and

You wonder perhaps that the people the making and worshipping of graven The morning of the third dawns, a images, the people should have honored

You see them yonder before the calf Aaron has been induced to set up, holdplain is where you would not look for congregation! no such congregation will ing a religious festival, eating and drinkit, in the very heart of a mountainous ever be seen together again till the day ing, shouting and singing and dancing, region, and is to be reached only by of jadgment. Jehovah Himself is to and having a gay time of it. Perhaps long winding and sometimes difficult preach, and when He speaks it is good not a quarter of the people have a hand in it, but then the three-quarters do not sides by towering mountains, terrible in Moses is with them. Before them rises stop it, and so it is their sin as well as their wild grandeur. This plain is call- the Mount on which rests the cloud, those who shamefully bow the knee and dance the lewd heather ish dances. Ah! Presently the cloud swells out into it is evil to wink at sin as well as com-

Up on the Mount the Lord tells Moses to repair forthwith to the people, because they have turned aside from the covenant they had solemnly ratified. Moses is sorry to learn of it, but there and then he puts in a plea to God for them. Taking in his hands the two the loud trumpet pealing forth its wierd | tables of stone containing the terms of Around its base is the channel of a mountain terrent, so that you can stand The Books of Juvenal. Hall's Book Store The Books of Juvenal. Hall's Book Store almost under the mountain.

Around its base is the channel of a mountain terrent, so that you can stand speaks in answer to the trumpet, and a seaks in answer to the trumpet, and a is awaiting him midway, and is glad to voice is heard out of the thick darkness see him, and the two descend together. Joshua leading the way considerably in The Books of Aeschylus. Hall's Book Store or the vast anditorium of some natural ear in that vast assembly hears the advance. Coming to a shoulder of the The Books of Aristophanes. Hall's Book S. temple, the dome of which is the blue voice. From end to end of the plain, mountain, all at once he hears an un-The Books of Terence... Hall's Book Store of heaven, the walls and pillars the gray and across to the mountain-slopes on the usual hubbub in the plain below. His The Books of Herodotus. Hall's Book Store | granite mountains enclosing it on all far side is heard the voice. Moses then | first thought is war, and he tells his fears sides, the entrances the wadies, and the steps forth, passes with safety the bounds to Moses. Presently he concludes it is pulpit and altar Ras Sufsafeh. It is around the mountain that none but him- not war, for it is neither the shout of perhaps a somewhat elevated pulpit, self may pass and live, and is soon lost the co queror, nor the shriek of the conquered. It is revelry he hears, music and dancing, the loud levity of a silly

But now they are on the plain, and before them stands the calf of gold, and the wild hilarity is still going on, unchecked even by the presence of Moses himself. Oh how wicked and senseless it seems to him straight from the presence of the Glorious Living Lord God feet higher still, but very few travellers the plain, and they beseech that Moses | Himself! Do you wonder that a holy have ever attempted to mount the peak. speak to them, and not Jehovah. anger fills his great soul? Out of his From the area the view is said to be "Speak thou with us, and we will hear; hands with an awful violence he casts grand. You can see, all around, the but let not God speak with us, lest we the tables of stone containing the covenant, and they are broken into fragments. Some have condemned his conduct as an what the Word of God does not condemn, we had better not condemn. Years with approbation rather than with dis-This done, he takes Aaron, and approbation. It was to impress the peo-It is just the place for such a gathering | Aaron's two sons Nadab and Abihn, | ple with the enormity of their sin he as that of Israel in the long ago. An and the seventy elders of Israel, and they did it, and to show them how utterly eminent engineer, Sir Henry James, ascond the mountain part of the way. they had nullified the covenant by their

Then he took the calf, and ordered it remarkable manner the conditions of a feet resting on what appeared to be a to be burned—the wood about it, and commanding height and of a plain in pavement of lapis-lazuli, the deep blue the metal to be reduced to powder, and every part of which the sights and of the cloudless heaven. They enjoyed cast into the stream of water that the sounds described in Exodus would reach a feast, eating and orinking as in the people had to drink from. He upan assembled multitude of more than Divine presence, but upon none of them | braided his weak brother for the part he Wo million souls."

I can see in imagination the scene of the Lord and the thick darkness hung levity was still going on, he called out in stentorian tones: "Whose is on the Then again Moses is summoned into Lord's side, let him come unto me." And the south-west and east, and spreading the Divine Presence, this time for a the sons of Levi hastened to his side. themselves wide over the plain. It long period. He leaves the people in He then ordered them to gird on the looks as if there is never to be an end charge of Aaron and Hur. He enjoins sword, and fall upon the wicked people. of the long columns, and soon the plain the elders to remain in the plain where It was a terrible act of retributive is full of a dense population, and the they are till he returns to them. Tak- justice. The Levites did so, and 3,000 opposite hillsides alive with flocks and ing Joshua with him as his assistant fell before their sword. Thus the day herds. It is a busy scene, for they and attendant Moses ascends to the that began in unballowed levity ended are at work putting up their dark goat- summit, perhaps to the heights of Jebel in tears and blood, and the sun went hair-cloth tents, and the hum of a great Musa which lies back of Ras Sufsafeh, down on a sad scene. But it was necescity rises to the mountain-top. On and is there lost to view for more than sary. Better 3,000 victims than 600,three sides of the Mount of God are a month. He is in close communion 000, or 2,000,000 perhaps, the whole grouped the tents, but well back from it, with Jehovah, beholding His glory, people. Sometimes it comes to that, dwelling in His presence, and receiving and the few are taken to save the many.

It is the first day of the third month, of God. Thus Moses is with God up heart laid the whole matter before Him.

Continued on third page.

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