

Exodus 33 — Leviticus 9.

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Article 14 of 47 **Short Meditations**

(Cavenagh, 1866.)

After the people are convicted of sin, when they had made the Golden Calf, it is shown us, I believe, how they learnt Christ, and found their relief in Him, putting on the garment of praise instead of the spirit of heaviness.

They are seen in Exodus 33 looking after the Mediator as he enters the Tabernacle of the Divine Presence — their attitude there bespeaking the anxiety of the soul to find out some remedy outside themselves for all the mighty and fatal mischief which they themselves had just wrought.

When Moses returns the second time from the hill, (Ex. 34) bearing the Tables of Stone, his face shines with a brightness that they found to be intolerable. They had not reached "the end of the law," and therefore, under conviction, they could not stand the law. They had stood it in Exodus 24: 17. "They were alive without the law" then — i.e., they did not know their own condition as sinners, and the uncompromising character of the law, and they looked at the fiery glory *undismayed*. But now that "sin revived," i.e., sin was understood aright by their consciences, because "the commandment had come" with power, they "die," they take the sentence of death into themselves, and Moses' face, representing the law, is intolerable. (See Rom. 7)

Moses then tells them about the Tabernacle, and its furniture and provisions, and they at once set themselves to do *all* that he tells them. Their state of conviction accounts for this. Get a soul this day under conviction, and he will readily attend to any Moses, to any one who he knows to be nearer the Lord than himself, and in the secret of peace. "Good Master, what good thing shall I do?" is the language of such an one. And so here — the convicted Congregation, still ignorant of the relief, feeling their present distress and amazement of heart, gladly listen to Moses' word, and do all that he commands. Their zeal is such that they have to be restrained; (Ex. 36); for all they can do may well be done to hide them from themselves and the intolerable glory of the law.

The work proceeds, and the tabernacle is set up. (Ex. 40) All the detached materials tire set in order — the house of God takes its due form; the holy places and the courts, the dwellings of the ark, the table, the candlestick, and the altars, are all arranged in their fit relations to each other, the Glory enters the house, and the Cloud covers it.

But the people are not relieved. They have been *obedient to directions*, but they have not yet *apprehended Christ*. They have been brought under conviction, and also led to the *materials of their deliverance*, if I may so speak. The way of escape is shown them; but they do not as yet understand it, nor can they, therefore, use it, or rejoice in it. Many a one hears all about Christ, but does not as yet know His value for themselves.

The scene, however, proceeds. Moses gets instructions as to the offerings. (Lev. 1-7) Very largely and fully all this is detailed to him — but the people are not addressed, much less relieved. The time, however, is at hand.

Moses is directed to get them all to the door of the tabernacle — not for the purpose of *making* the tabernacle and its furniture, but of *learning* it. And they accordingly take their stand at the door of this mystic house, while Aaron is consecrated, and while he goes through all the services of his office.

They bring their sin-offering to him. This they had never done before. They bring their sin-offering to him, and see him go through the services of the altar for them. And then — the Glory appears, and the Fire from heaven takes up the sacrifice from the altar. (Lev. 8, 9) They see this, each one for himself, and they are relieved. They have reached *deliverance*. *They witness the acceptance of the victim, and the grant or display of the glory as the fruit of such acceptance*. They bow and worship. They pass from a state of *conviction* into the consciousness of *deliverance*. To them the veil is rent from top to bottom. What do they want more? What do we want more at this moment? The sacrifice is accepted in heaven as it went up for them. It pleaded *their* cause, and the plea was *heard*. What more does a sinner need? And the richest thing with which God could seal this is granted — the Glory itself comes forth to them.