

Australian New Church College Seminar
May 24th to 27th 2012

Arcana Studies - Exodus Chapter 33

At the outset, please read and reflect on this. How do you handle statements in the Writings such as these, so many of them, and sometimes taken to be anti-Semitic.

With reference to Exodus 33: 16 “And I and your people will be made more distinguished than all the people who are on the face of the ground”

It was this end in view – that they should be made more distinguished than all throughout the whole world – that caused the Israelite nation to worship Jehovah and enabled them to be outwardly holy. This is clear from what has been shown previously regarding that nation. The fact that such people are able to be outwardly holy and to seem to others to be worshippers of God is clear from the idolaters spoken of in the historical narratives of the Word, who were able in like manner to do the outward things. But any one may see and deduce that these idolaters possessed no inner holiness from the consideration that the Divine Truths which have been revealed in the Word are what make worship internal, when people know them and live a life in keeping with them...

Since that nation was such that their end in view – to be pre-eminent over others – enabled them to be outwardly holy, and since among such people such as these the things that are representative of celestial and spiritual realities, which the outward things of their worship were, can be conveyed to angels and a link with heaven can thereby be established, that nation was accepted. But anyone who supposes that this made them worshippers of God is very much mistaken; for they were worshippers of self and of the world, and idolaters at heart. And because they were such, neither was any revelation given them of the interior things of worship, which have to do with faith in the Lord and love to Him. This is evident from the books of the Old Testament, and also from the fact that they did not acknowledge the Lord when He came into the world, and indeed still do not acknowledge Him; and if presented with teachings about the Lord contained in the prophetic parts, even then they do not accept them. They desire a Messiah who will exalt them above all throughout the whole world, not a Messiah whose kingdom is in heaven and who looks from there to the salvation of all on earth. From all this it becomes clear what that nation has been like since the earliest ages...” **AC 10570**

Tying it in with such as

“People who are governed, as this nation is, by loves that are filthy – that is, by avarice and by self-love accompanying this – are unable to raise their minds to a level where truth is seen from a viewpoint other than themselves.” **AC 4911**