

Easter at Imax

Showing of Movie

The Ten Commandments

A Prayer and a Sermon¹

We are going to be watching the movie THE TEN COMMANDMENTS. We are going to pray about this movie, about our reaction to it. It is the story of a people who did not really want to serve and obey God and so God via the prophet Moses gave and taught them these Commandments as the SECRET OF LIFE AND OF SOCIETY. These Commandments are valid and stand even today. They are somewhat parallel to the Muslim sharia. In fact, most world religions have laws similar to it.

A US Chaplain to the STATE SENATE OF KANSAS, USA, offered the following prayer to a people who, according to his judgement, had REJECTED AND TWISTED that law. We will pray this prayer, but not so much that the people of Kansas may obey it but we here in Vancouver, BC, Canada. That WE may return to those commandments of our Lord, the secret of SUCCESSFUL LIVING

¹ Prayer and sermon delivered on Easter, March 22, 2008, at the Imax theatre in downtown Vancouver.

The second part of my prayer will be an INTERACTIVE version of a much more famous prayer, The Lord's Prayer. But not ONLY HIS. We are going to appropriate it so that it becomes your and my prayer. When we get to it, please follow the cues or instructions I give you at the time.

Let us pray:

THE CHAPLAIN'S PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we come before you today to ask for forgiveness and to seek your direction and guidance. We know your Word says, "Woe on those who call evil good," but that's exactly what we have done. We have lost our spiritual equilibrium and reversed our values

We confess that we have:

Ridiculed the absolute Truth of Your Word and called it pluralism.

Worshipped other gods and called it materialism.

Endorsed perversion and called it an alternative lifestyle.

Exploited the poor and called it lottery.

Neglect the needy and called it self-preservation.

Rewarded laziness and called it welfare.

Killed our unborn children and called it a choice.

Neglected to discipline our children and called it self-esteem.

Abused power and called it political savvy.

Coveted our neighbour's possessions and called it ambition.

Polluted the air with profanity and pornography and called it freedom of expression.

Ridiculed the time-honoured values of our forefathers and called it enlightenment.

Search us, O God, and know our hearts today.

Cleans us from every sin and set us free.

BOER: Restore in our hearts the power of these life-giving commandments



THE LORD'S PRAYER

We will be turning this into THE PRAYER OF THE PEOPLE

(I will be skipping a few lines of it. So, pay attention)

OUR FATHER WHO IS IN HEAVEN (repeat with me 2x)

But not only in far-away heaven, but You want also to be in our hearts, right here, within us. Come here then. We invite you to move into our hearts so that our lives, our faith, our commitments may be transformed by Your will right here in our hearts.

HALLOWED BE YOUR NAME

***Hallowed ! Hallowed Hallowed be your Name (repeat 2x)
May I live these Commandments so that I hallow, make holy, that I, we ALL honour Your Name***

YOUR KINGDOM COME AND YOUR WILL BE DONE

(repeat 2x)

**By ME, by US here through making these Commandments our life style and values.
Rule in our hearts so that Your Kingdom can get a start there and from there move out into this entire world.**

FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS (repeat 2x)

Yes, Lord, forgive, forgive, forgive

DELIVER US FROM THE EVIL ONE repeat 2x

**Enable us, empower us to live by your commandments.
By Your will. Turn us into Your Temple so that Satan lose his foothold over us and we empowered to bring Your Kingdom. To show your kingdom to Vancouver.**

For yours is the kingdom, the power and the glory for ever!

For yours is the Kingdom! Shout it out!

YOURS IS THE POWER! Shout it!

YOURS is the power. Help us believe it. It's not in the hands of the proud, of the politicians, of the CEOs.

YOURS is the power.

FOREVER AND EVER—

This, O Lord, is our prayer. This is our CONFESSION** before you and the world. Place these Commandments in our hearts so that this entire prayer comes to be realized through me and all those people in this theatre.**

Everything else that takes place in this theatre is show. It is not for real.

Bu these Commandments ARE for real. Without them we get stuck. Deliver us from the evil one. In Jesus Name—

And all the people say AMEN! 3x

My name is Dr. John Boer. I live only 20 min. walking from here, right here in downtown. But I believe I represent you well in that I am from all over. Born in NL. Dual citizen. Lived and worked on three continents, traveled to around 40 countries. I am you. I am from everywhere.

I also represent you in that I am interested enough in the things of God to come here and watch this amazing movie. Yes, an amazing movie when you think of the wonderful art and technology that was utilized to produce it. But more amazing than this movie is the story itself.

All of us were interested enough to accept the invitation to attend this event of Christian celebration. The celebration for this weekend is that of the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. I know, not all of us may quite think of it that way, but you were interested enough to join us and to see what this is all about. The movie itself does not talk about that subject. Not even about Jesus. What we saw was a key element in a history that eventually led up to Christ, His death and resurrection.

WHAT HAVE YOU SEEN?

If we were to write down our own answer to this question, there would probably be as many answers as the people here. Since we don't have the time to all give our own answers, I will represent you here as well.

Yes, we saw an excellently produced movie, but we saw more than that. We saw the work of a man who is revered by at least three of the world's great religions as a prophet. His name is Moses. In the West African language of Hausa we call him Musa. The Prophet Moses. Annabi Musa. We saw how he was called by a God he at first did not even know. This God identified

Himself at first to him as I AM WHO I AM. As the one who cannot be defined in human terms. Who cannot be captured within our categories of thought. Whose thoughts and ways are different, greater and higher than ours. Who is beyond our reasoning capacity. Whom we can *BEGIN* to understand and follow only if we accept His self-revelation that today we find in several ways but primarily in HIS BIBLE with all of its rich stories, poetry, wisdom, history, letters from and about Him.

Today, we saw the SPIRITUAL STRUGGLE of a man called by God to lead his people out of slavery into a life of freedom. The struggle was hard. Often Moses did not understand. Often he disagreed. Often he was mystified by this I AM. Often it was too much for him and he would almost rebel. Why. Why. Why. You remember his heart-rending whys. Those whys were not always answered.

Today, we saw a REBELLIOUS PEOPLE who were not always prepared to follow Him. They said it openly: Can we not go our own way? The way we want and understand? The way we can see with our own eyes? But every time they went their own way, they ended up in catastrophes. That history teaches us that our own independent ways do not work, no matter how smart or educated or scientific we are.

Today we saw the publication of the Decalogue, the Ten Words or the Ten Commandments, that basic code of human behaviour that summarizes what its Author, God Himself, revealed through the Prophet Moses. Though this history is associated most closely with Judaism and Christianity, the sharia of Muslims also most derives from those same words, while almost all major

religions represented here recognize those same laws but may put them in different words and have received them through a different history.

We are a **MULTICULTURAL** people gathered here this morning. We are used to different cultures, where the most basic truths of life are expressed in different ways. Not only are they expressed differently in different cultures but also and perhaps even more in different stages of history. And the revelation of God takes those stages into consideration. He did not deal with a people of 3000 years ago as if they lived in the 21st century with its values and standards.

God created the world and the human race good. But we soon fell off the wagon; our ancestors committed sin, they rebelled. That started a long period of spiritual and cultural degeneration over the centuries. These developments took different forms in different civilizations. Things went up and down, then here, then there. But man became more and more lost, farther and farther removed from God's standards. Life became cheap. People killed for reasons that today we consider *barbaric* and can hardly understand even. God dealt with them at the level at which He found them. And so we see that in the days of Moses, things were very rough and tumble. We shake our heads at them now. And even ask how God could be so cruel at times. I foresee that, if our history continues, some centuries down the line, people will ask the same questions about us and about how God dealt with us of the 21st century.

The prophet Moses was one of these figures in history whom God used to remind people of His laws. These were not new laws. They were embedded in

creation. They express the basic formula for successful living and successful civilizations. EVEN TODAY!

There were many prophets after Moses, but for Christians the major one of all is Jesus Christ. He struggled with His people, the Jews, who had developed a legalistic way of interpreting those Ten Words and had made them oppressive for the people. This Jesus insisted that those Ten Words were still valid, that not a jot or tittle in them had been invalidated or dropped. However, HE BLEW NEW LIFE AND MEANING into them according to His stage of history. He re-interpreted, He enriched them in terms of LOVE AND JUSTICE—these are the KEY WORDS with which He began the next era that we call NEW TESTAMENT era.

Jesus obeyed these laws during His ministry. He exemplified them and showed how RADICAL they are. How they go against the grain of sinful people but how they remain the RECIPE FOR A HEALTHY LIFE AND HEALTHY CIVILIZATION. He exemplified the HOLINESS that results from obeying them and using them as inspiration for His whole life.

But He ALSO exemplified how horrible human sin and disobedience is in the eyes of God. We have grown accustomed to evil and accept a lot of it as just part of life. To God our current evil ways are as offensive and hateful as the very first sin. He never gets used to our sinfulness and simply CANNOT accept it. And so, in terms of the culture of those ancient days, Jesus became the personification of evil with God so that God cast on Him all the guilt that the human race had piled up. Consequently Jesus suffered and died in the most horrible AND shameful way that people could think of those days. He

was mocked, ridiculed and crucified, rejected by His own people, who one week wanted to proclaim Him their King but who a week later screamed **CRUCIFY HIM! CRUCIFY HIM!** He became the ultimate example of the evil of evil, of the mother of sin. Absolutely horrendous to God and totally unacceptable. He was totally forsaken by God so that He cried out to Him as did Moses: **Why? Why?** In that condition, in that humiliation, in that awful pain and loneliness, he gave up His Spirit. He was buried—and that is what we remember today, between the day of crucifixion—and **HALLELUIAH**, the day of **RESURRECTION**—tomorrow.

Friends, **THAT** is the Jesus we celebrate today and we thank you for accepting our invitation. We now invite you to think of your own sin, your own burdens, your own feeling of being forsaken. Of not knowing the meaning of life or how to go about that life. We urge you to consider Him as you search for the secret of life. He is the **ULTIMATE** example of holiness, of love and justice. He is the one who is currently sitting at the right hand of God, as the NT book of Hebrews paints it. There He is pleading your case for forgiveness and freedom.

In the OT days, Moses represented the way of freedom and liberation from slavery. But he was only a **SHADOW** of a more profound way towards freedom and liberation. If you feel bound, Jesus will untie the knots that bind you and open the way for you to a life of joy and peace, of love and justice. He invites you today to a new life of **FREEDOM FROM THE GUILT** in your hearts, to a new life of openness to God, openness to your neighbour and openness to the entire world. A life that I personally experience, testify and

recommend to you as nothing short of EXHILARATING, every day, every week and every year of your life.

Before I close I want you to respond. If you want this freedom and liberation that Jesus offers you do two things for me and do it loud and clear for all of Vancouver to hear. If you do, answer the question I pose with a loud YES and raise your right hand. DO YOU WANT THIS FREEDOM? YES! AGAIN: SO THAT YOU RAISE THIS ROOF AND ALL VANCOUVER CAN HEAR YOU. DO YOU? YES

Congratulations. This may be the day of YOUR resurrection to a new life. Thank you for joining us in this celebration of affirmation. Be sure to invite us to YOUR next celebration, YOUR Celebration of LIFE, Your celebration of your RESURRECTION! AMEN? SHOUT IT OUT 3 TIMES....