

A photograph of a person from the waist up, wearing a white prayer shawl (tallit) with a colorful striped kippah (skullcap) underneath. The person is holding a dark, curved shofar (ram's horn) in their right hand, pointing it upwards. The background is a bright, golden sunset sky with scattered clouds. The overall mood is peaceful and spiritual.

Feast of Trumpets Meditations

Adrian Ebens

Introduction

There are ten days from the Feast of Trumpets until the Day of Atonement. Here is a perfect time to consider each one of the Ten Commandments on the lead up to that most special time of the Day of Atonement.

Thanks to our sister Azadeh, we have collected the thoughts for meditation that I put together each day from the feast of trumpets until Atonement during 2022.

Several expressed the blessing they received from thinking on each commandment for a day leading up to Atonement. Truly the trumpet sounds to our hearts to prepare and to repent and to seek the Lord in that 10 day period. How precious to know our Father loves and forgives us for our sins and freely pardons us when we seek Him in humility.

I pray you are blessed in reading these meditations.

Adrian Ebens

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Intro by Pastor Adrian Ebens

Dear Family, I wish you a blessed feast of Trumpets today. May we rest in the Spirit sent to us this day. Over the next 10 days I will post the section from the book Sons and Daughters of God from Feb 19 to 28 where there is a daily reading on each of the 10 Commandments. Here is Commandment 1 for meditation and contemplation.

1. We Shall Have No Other Gods

Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Exodus 20:3. {SD 56.1}

The ten commandments, Thou shalt, and Thou shalt not, are ten promises assured to us if we render obedience to the law governing the universe. {SD 56.2}

There is not a moral precept enjoined in any part of the Bible which is not engraved with the finger of God in His holy law on the two tables of stone. A copy was given to Moses on Mount Sinai. The first four commandments enjoined upon man his duty to serve the Lord our God with all the heart, and with all the soul, and with all the mind, and with all the strength. This takes the whole man. This requires a love so fervent, so intense, that man can cherish nothing in his mind or affections in rivalry with God; and his works will bear the signature of heaven. Everything is secondary to the glory of God. Our heavenly Father is to be ever cherished as the first, the joy and prosperity, the light and sufficiency of our life, and our portion forever. {SD 56.3}

Let men worship and serve the Lord God, and Him only. Let not selfish pride be lifted up and served as a god. Let not money be made a god. If sensuality is not kept under the control of the higher powers of the mind, base passion will rule the being. Anything that is made the subject of undue thought and admiration, absorbing the mind, is a god chosen before the Lord. {SD 56.4}

Jehovah, the eternal, self-existent, uncreated One, Himself the source and sustainer of all, is alone entitled to supreme reverence and worship. Man is

forbidden to give to any other object the first place in his affections or his service. Whatever we cherish that tends to lessen our love for God or to interfere with the service due Him, of that do we make a god.

Additional comment by Pastor Edrian Ebens

Within our theme of the first commandment, I found this short video insightful from Dennis Prager. He speaks from a Jewish perspective and what worshipping one God means in terms of human equality and value:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HA1Xgm2rit0>

Intro by Pastor Adrian Ebens

Blessings dear family. This is day two towards the Day of Atonement. How wonderful that in the joy of serving our merciful, loving Father, we can be set free from idolatry. Without the need to bow to the gods of money, entertainment and sensuality to name a few.

2. We Shall Not Serve Any Graven Images

Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them. Exodus 20:4, 5. {SD 57.1}

Our Creator demands our supreme devotion, our first allegiance. Anything which tends to abate our love for God, or to interfere with the service due Him, becomes thereby an idol. With some their lands, their houses, their merchandise, are the idols. Business enterprises are prosecuted with zeal and energy, while the service of God is made a secondary consideration. Family worship is neglected, secret prayer forgotten. Many claim to deal justly with their fellow-men, and seem to feel that in so doing they discharge their whole duty. But it is not enough to keep the last six commandments of the Decalogue. We are to love the Lord our God with all the heart. Nothing short of obedience to every precept . . . can satisfy the claims of the divine law. {SD 57.2}

There are many whose hearts have been so hardened by prosperity that they forget God, and forget the wants of their fellow-men. Professed Christians adorn themselves with jewelry, laces, costly apparel, while the Lord's poor suffer for the necessities of life. Men and women who claim redemption through a Saviour's blood will squander the means intrusted to them for the saving of other souls, and then grudging dole out their offerings for religion, giving liberally only when it will bring honor to themselves. These are idolaters. {SD 57.3}

Anything that diverts the mind from God assumes the form of an idol, and that

is why there is so little power in the church today. {SD 57.4}

The second commandment forbids the worship of the true God by images or similitudes. . . . The mind, turned away from the infinite perfection of Jehovah, would be attracted to the creature rather than to the Creator. {SD 57.5}

God is a searcher of the heart. He distinguishes between true heart-service and idolatry.

Intro by Pastor Adrian Ebens

Good morning dear family. Today is day 3 and we are meditating on not taking God's name in vain. This has special meaning for us because God's name as we know is His character. To profess to believe in a Non violent, non condemning Father means that we trust despite our fallen natures that we shall be like Him and not take His name on our lips and then speak evil of our brethren and judge them. This commandment shows me I am poor in Spirit and I need, oh how I need that Spirit of love, peace and mercy for all. May we claim this promise that our Father will deliver us from taking His Name in Vain. Here are Ellen White's thoughts.

3. We Shall Not Take the Name of the Lord in Vain

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain. Exodus 20:7. {SD 58.1}

The reason for this command is given: we are not to swear "by the heaven, for it is the throne of God; nor by the earth, for it is the footstool of his feet; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, for thou canst not make one hair white or black." All things come of God. We have nothing that we have not received; and, more than this, we have nothing that has not been purchased for us by the blood of Christ. {SD 58.2}

Burning words of passion should never be spoken, for in the sight of God and holy angels they are as a species of swearing. {SD 58.3}

This commandment not only prohibits false oaths and common swearing, but it forbids us to use the name of God in a light or careless manner, without regard to its awful significance. By the thoughtless mention of God in common conversation, by appeals to Him in trivial matters, and by the frequent and thoughtless repetition of His name, we dishonor Him. "Holy and reverend in his name." All should meditate upon His majesty, His purity and holiness, that the heart may be impressed with a sense of His exalted character; and His holy name should be uttered with reverence and solemnity. {SD 58.4}

It is not men whom we are to exalt and worship; it is God, the only true and living God, to whom our worship and reverence are due. According to the teaching of the Scriptures, it dishonors God to address ministers as "reverend." No mortal has any right to attach this to his own name, or to the name of any other human being. It belongs only to God, to distinguish Him from every other being. . . . "Holy and reverend is his name." We dishonor God when we use this word where it does not belong. . . . The Father and the Son alone are to be exalted.

Intro by Pastor Adrian Ebens

It is fitting that the fourth commandment should be considered on the Sabbath in our 10 day walk from Trumpets to Atonement. How much we have learned about this precious commandment and the gift of the Spirit it brings to us in double measure as our beloved Saviour rests in the bosom of His Father and we drink from the overflowing cup within His Soul. Here is what Ellen White says on the Sabbath in Sons and Daughters of God.

4. We Shall Keep the Sabbath Day Holy

Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy. Exodus 20:8. {SD 59.1}

God said, "The seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God." He placed His sanctity upon this day and blessed it and hallowed it as a day of rest. . . . It is the only commandment in the whole Decalogue that tells who God is. It places God in distinction with every other god. It says the God that made the heaven and the earth, the God that made the trees and the flowers and that created man; this is the God that you are to keep before your children, and you have only to point to the flowers and tell them that He made these and that He rested on the seventh day from all His labors. . . . The seventh day is a God-given memorial. {SD 59.2}

Pointing to God as the maker of the heavens and the earth, it distinguishes the true God from all false gods. All who keep the seventh day, signify by this act that they are worshippers of Jehovah. Thus the Sabbath is the sign of man's allegiance to God as long as there are any upon the earth to serve Him. . . . {SD 59.3}

God has given men six days wherein to labor, and He requires that their own work be done in the six working days. Acts of necessity and mercy are permitted on the Sabbath, the sick and suffering are at all times to be cared for; but unnecessary labor is to be strictly avoided. . . . And the commandment includes all within our gates. The inmates of the house are to lay aside their worldly business during the sacred hours. All should unite to honor God by willing service upon His holy days. {SD 59.4}

So long as the heavens and the earth endure, the Sabbath will continue as a sign of the Creator's power. And when Eden shall bloom on earth again, God's holy rest day will be honored by all beneath the sun. "From one sabbath to another" the inhabitants of the glorified new earth shall go up "to worship before me, saith the Lord."

Intro by Pastor Adrian Ebens

Today let us think of the 5th commandment. This command speaks to such a vital principles in our movement. Honouring the Channels of blessing that God has placed in our lives. To reject the counsel and guidance of your parents, pastors and teachers without prayerful consideration, going to Scripture and appealing for clarity where needed is death. Love, gratitude and a desire to honour those placed over us is at the heart of the 5th commandment. Appealing to them when they may be in error in a spirit of care and concern for them and their reputation as Abigail did for David when he wished to kill Nabal is important. Have you been faithful to your parents, even when they have been harsh and hurtful? Have you appealed to them from Scripture when they have been unreasonable? Have you been thankful for their instruction that has blessed you and saved you from peril? Search your heart with the candle of the Spirit to know where you stand. Here is Ellen White's counsel. It is pure, clear and vital for us today.

5. Long Life Promised for Honoring Parents

Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. Exodus 20:12. {SD 60.1}

Those who would truly follow Christ must let Him abide in the heart, and enthrone Him there as supreme. They must represent His spirit and character in their home life, and show courtesy and kindness to those with whom they come in contact. There are many children who profess to know the truth, who do not render to their parents the honor and affection that are due to them, who manifest but little love to father and mother, and fail to honor them in deferring to their wishes, or in seeking to relieve them of anxiety. Many who profess to be Christians do not know what it means to "honour thy father and thy mother," and consequently will know just as little what it means, "that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." . . . The Heart-searcher knows what is your attitude toward your parents; for He is weighing moral character in the golden scales of the heavenly sanctuary. O,

confess your neglect of your parents, confess your indifference toward them, and your contempt of God's holy commandment. {SD 60.2}

Parents are entitled to a degree of love and respect which is due to no other person. God Himself, who has placed upon them a responsibility for the souls committed to their charge, has ordained that during the earlier years of life, parents shall stand in the place of God to their children. And he who rejects the rightful authority of his parents, is rejecting the authority of God. The fifth commandment requires the children not only to yield respect, submission, and obedience to their parents, but also to give them love and tenderness, to lighten their cares, to guard their reputation, and to succor and comfort them in old age. {SD 60.3}

The fifth commandment is binding upon children as long as their own lives and the lives of their parents are spared.

Intro by Pastor Adrian Ebens

On the 6th day towards the day of Atonement we consider the commandment "Thou Shalt not kill." In those four words is found such a glorious truth of God's character. The law is a transcript of His character (COL 305). When the law says thou shalt not kill, it means God does not kill. This is further expanded by the thought that the commandments in the new covenant are promises. This means only by the Spirit of God can you keep any of them. This means to keep this commandment you must receive the Spirit which does not kill. How precious to know that our God does not kill anyone. Jesus on earth fully revealed what the commandments look like in real life. He never killed anyone while here, and this is the only definition of the 6th commandment we have in real life. Here is our reading for today on the sixth commandment.

6. We Shall Not Kill

Thou shalt not kill. Exodus 20:13. {SD 61.1}

All acts of injustice that tend to shorten life; the spirit of hatred and revenge, or the indulgence of any passion that leads to injurious acts toward others, or causes us even to wish them harm (for "whoso hateth his brother is a murderer"); a selfish neglect of caring for the needy or suffering; all self-indulgence or unnecessary deprivation or excessive labor that tends to injure health, all these are, to a greater or less degree, violations of the sixth commandment. {SD 61.2}

Some sacrifice physical and moral obligations, thinking to find happiness, and they lose both soul and body. Others will seek their happiness in indulgence of an unnatural appetite, and consider the indulgence of taste more desirable than health and life. Many suffer themselves to be enchained by sensual passions, and will sacrifice physical strength, intellect, and moral powers, to the gratification of lust. They will bring themselves to untimely graves, and in the Judgment will be charged with self-murder. {SD 61.3}

The spirit of hatred and revenge originated with Satan; and it led him to put to

death the Son of God. Whoever cherishes malice or unkindness is cherishing the same spirit; and its fruit will be unto death. In the revengeful thought the evil deed lies enfolded, as the plant in the seed. {SD 61.4}

The law of God takes note of the jealousy, envy, hatred, malignity, revenge, lust, and ambition that surge through the soul, but have not found expression in outward action, because the opportunity, not the will, has been wanting. And these sinful emotions will be brought into the account in the day when "God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing." {SD 61.5}

Christ is righteousness, sanctification, and redemption to those who believe in Him. . . . He set before us a perfect example of holy obedience to God's law.

Intro by Pastor Adrian Ebens

In our journey to the Day of Atonement, we have reached the 7th commandment. Maybe it has been placed at number because this commandment reveals the complete depravity and sinfulness of mankind. To look upon a woman to lust after her breaks the commandments and exposes you to the wrath of Satan. At a deeper level the writings of Ellen White penetrate to a far wider problem.

"The heart in which Christ dwells will be so filled, so satisfied, with His love that it will not be consumed with longing to attract sympathy and attention to itself." MB 65

How many men and women engage in conversation to seek sympathy for themselves and to fill the void they feel through lack of the Spirit of Christ? How many social media posts express the theme of "What about me! It isn't fair! I have had enough and I want my share!"

All of this fuels the violation of the seventh commandment. Social media, private messaging and video calls has opened the gates of hell for such desires for comfort and sympathy to manifest in adultery and fornication.

For those who are married, to seek another relationship where the present does not seem to satisfy, builds into the character the principle that relationships are expendable. When things get hard then just end the relationship. Such character development will ensure loneliness in the end - the very thing that was trying to be avoided.

Guard your words, your actions, your posts on social media that have become the playground for young women to parade themselves like in a meat market and for men to salivate in that market seeking whom he may devour for his lusts. Guard the affections, guard the statements expressed. Beware of seeking sympathy from a source not provided by God for you.

Above all seek comfort in Christ. May He be your joy and song always.

Here is Ellen White's comments from Sons and Daughters of God page 63.

7. We Shall Be Pure

Thou shalt not commit adultery. Exodus 20:14. {SD 62.1}

This commandment forbids not only acts of impurity, but sensual thoughts and desires, or any practice that tends to excite them. Purity is demanded not only in the outward life, but in the secret intents and emotions of the heart. Christ, who taught the far-reaching obligation of the law of God, declared the evil thought or look to be as truly sin as is the unlawful deed. {SD 62.2}

When the thought of evil is loved and cherished, however secretly, said Jesus, it shows that sin still reigns in the heart. The soul is still in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity. He who finds pleasure in dwelling upon scenes of impurity, who indulges the evil thought, the lustful look, may behold in the open sin, with its burden of shame and heartbreaking grief, the true nature of the evil which he has hidden in the chambers of the soul. The season of temptation, under which, it may be, one falls into grievous sin, does not create the evil that is revealed, but only develops or makes manifest that which was hidden and latent in the heart. As a man "thinketh in his heart, so is he"; for out of the heart "are the issues of life." The heart in which Christ dwells, will be so filled, so satisfied, with His love that it will not be consumed with longing to attract sympathy and attention to itself. And through the surrender of the soul to God, His wisdom can accomplish what human wisdom fails to do. {SD 62.3}

So long as life shall last, there will be need of guarding the affections and the passions with a firm purpose. Not one moment can we be secure except as we rely upon God, the life hidden with Christ. {SD 62.4}

The nearer we live to Jesus, the more will we partake of His pure and holy character; and the more offensive sin appears to us, the more exalted and desirable will appear the purity and brightness of Christ.

Intro by Pastor Adrian Ebens

As we are walking through the commandments each day, I am in wonder how our beloved Father can write these precious laws in our hearts if we let Him. Our natures are so at war with them. How grateful we can be that there is a way to eternal life through Jesus Christ.

The commandment that we not steal, like all commandments, is broad and deep. The thought that the Christian Church has stolen the character of our Father and replaced it with a violent, mysterious 3 in 1 tyrant is cause for extreme sorrow. There is the obvious stealing of money, goods and time.

But then there is the stealing of affection, secret communications to steal the heart of someone that you have no right to take as yours. These are the thoughts Ellen White expounds in today's thoughts on the commandments.

May we ask for the Spirit of Jesus to give us victory over all forms of stealing.

8. We Shall Not Steal

Thou shalt not steal. Exodus 20:15. {SD 63.1}

Both public and private sins are included in this prohibition. The eighth commandment condemns man-stealing and slave-dealing, and forbids wars of conquest. It condemns theft and robbery. It demands strict integrity in the minutest details of the affairs of life. It forbids overreaching in trade, and requires the payment of just debts or wages. It declares that every attempt to advantage one's self by the ignorance, weakness, or misfortune of another, is registered as fraud in the books of heaven. {SD 63.2}

The eighth commandment is to barricade the soul, and hedge man in, so that he shall make no injurious encroachment--which his self-love and desire for gain would make on his neighbor's rights. It forbids every species of dishonesty, injustice, or fraud, however prevalent, however palliated by plausible pretenses. {SD 63.3}

"Thou shalt not steal" was written by the finger of God upon the tables of stone, yet how much underhand stealing of affections is practiced and excused. A deceptive courtship is maintained, private communications are kept up, until the affections of one who is inexperienced and knows not whereunto these things may grow, are in a measure withdrawn from her parents and placed upon him who shows by the very course he pursues that he is unworthy of her love. The Bible condemns every species of dishonesty. {SD 63.4}

To trifle with hearts is a crime of no small magnitude in the sight of a holy God. {SD 63.5}

As we deal with our fellow men in petty dishonesty or in more daring fraud, so will we deal with God. Men who persist in a course of dishonesty will carry out their principles until they cheat their own souls and lose heaven and eternal life. {SD 63.6}

So long as heaven and earth continue, the holy principles of God's law will . . . continue, a source of blessing, sending forth streams to refresh the earth.

Intro by Pastor Adrian Ebens

Today we consider the ninth commandment to not bear false witness. This commandment is a cornerstone of solid lasting relationships. Lying or hiding the truth from those around you erodes the integrity of your relationships. As Ellen White points out in this meditation, a look of the eye, a glance can tell a lie as much as words. And what of present trends in the world. Changing your gender is a lie. Enhancing your features with makeup and implants is a lie. Living beyond your means is a lie. Overstating or understating the truth is a lie. Jestng or telling an untrue joke is a lie. Lord Jesus, help us to speak truth in all things.

9. We Shall Not Lie, or Bear False Witness

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour. Exodus 20:16. {SD 64.1}

The ninth commandment requires of us an inviolable regard for exact truth in every declaration by which the character of our fellow men may be affected. The tongue, which is kept so little under the control of the human agent, is to be bridled by strong conscientious principles, by the law of love toward God and man. {SD 64.2}

False-speaking in any matter, every attempt or purpose to deceive our neighbor, is here included. An intention to deceive is what constitutes falsehood. By a glance of the eye, a motion of the hand, an expression of the countenance, as falsehood may be told as effectually as by words. All intentional overstatement, every hint or insinuation calculated to convey an erroneous or exaggerated impression, even the statement of facts in such a manner as to mislead, is falsehood. This precept forbids every effort to injure our neighbor's reputation by misrepresentation or evil surmising, by slander or tale-bearing. Even the intentional suppression of truth, by which injury may result to others, is a violation of the ninth commandment. {SD 64.3}

He [Jesus] teaches that the exact truth should be the law of speech. "Let your

speech be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay." . . . These words condemn all those meaningless phrases and expletives that border on profanity. They condemn the deceptive compliments, the evasion of truth, the flattering phrases, the exaggerations, the misrepresentations in trade, that are current in society and in the business world. They teach that no one who tries to appear what he is not, or whose words do not convey the real sentiment of his heart, can be called truthful. . . . {SD 64.4}

Everything that Christians do should be as transparent as the sunlight. Truth is of God; deception, in every one of its myriad forms, is of Satan. . . . We can not speak the truth unless our minds are continually guided by Him who is truth.

Intro by Pastor Adrian Ebens

Blessed Day of Atonement everyone. Today we consider the 10th and final commandment. This goes beyond the actions of men to his very thoughts. The desire to possess and have things to make us happy is the manifestation of someone losing the identity war; when money is more important than relationships; when the desire for the object of a person is more important than the vows that were made at the marriage altar. We turn to our Saviour and plead His Spirit and claim the promise that we will not covet.

10. We Shall Not Be Covetous

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's. Exodus 20:17. {SD 65.1}

The last commandment condemns covetousness. Every selfish desire, every degree of discontent, every act of overreaching, every selfish gratification works to the strengthening and developing of a character which will destroy the Christlikeness of the human agent, and close the gates of the city of God against him. {SD 65.2}

When . . . angels come to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation, and witness the exhibition of selfishness, of covetousness, of overreaching, and benefiting self at others' disadvantage, they turn away in grief. . . . In no way could the Lord be better glorified and the truth more highly honored, than for unbelievers to see that the truth has wrought a great and good work upon the lives of naturally covetous and penurious men. If it could be seen that the faith of such had an influence to mold their characters, to change them from close, selfish, overreaching, money-loving men, to men who love to do good, who seek opportunities to use their means to bless those who need to be blessed, who visit the widow and fatherless in their affliction, and who keep themselves unspotted from the world, it would be an evidence that their religion was genuine. . . . Those who profess to be waiting and watching for the appearing of their Lord should not disgrace their profession by bantering in deal and

standing for the last penny. Such fruit does not grow upon the Christian tree.
{SD 65.3}

The tenth commandment strikes at the very root of all sins, prohibiting the selfish desire, from which springs the sinful act. He who in obedience to God's law refrains from indulging even a sinful desire for that which belongs to another, will not be guilty of an act of wrong toward his fellow-creatures.

Feast of Trumpet Meditations

A small collection of meditations on each of the 10 Commandments prepared during the time of Trumpets of 2022 and released each of the 10 days leading to Atonement.

May our Father write His law on our hearts that we might be like Him through Jesus our Lord.