

A Prayer for Our Country

by Rabbi Jay Sherwood

Our God and God of our Ancestors, bless our nation and its inhabitants. Protect its citizens from all threats, both domestic and foreign. Bring blessing, health, and prosperity from sea to shining sea. Guide our people to walk in Your ways, as You prophesied to Jeremiah, to “act with kindness, justice and righteousness throughout the land.”

O God, be our beacon of kindness. You teach us through the wisdom of King David that, “the world is built on kindness.” May racism, anti-Semitism, misogyny, homophobia, and all other forms of hatred be uprooted from our land; and may You fill our hearts with empathy and love. May our nation welcome the stranger and the immigrant, give aid to the poor and the hungry, and care for the underprivileged and the disenfranchised. We ask that You draw us and the leaders of our nation nearer to Your kindness.

O God, be our beacon of justice. You implore us with the commandment in your holy Torah, “Justice, justice, you will pursue!” Let there be justice for every person who dwells inside our borders, no matter the color of their skin, the gender of their love, the place of their birth or the balance in their bank account. May the judges of our land consider equity and compassion in every decision. We ask that You draw us and the leaders of our nation nearer to Your justice.

O God, be our beacon of righteousness. You explain to us with the poetry of Your Proverbs that, “the righteous person is the foundation of the world.” Send Your good counsel to our elected and appointed officials, so that they might steer our country in a direction that celebrates our common humanity. Impress upon those who have been placed in positions of responsibility that they have the moral obligation to protect the safety and welfare of everyone they serve. We ask that You draw us and the leaders of our nation nearer to Your righteousness.

As we strive to act with kindness, justice and righteousness, so may our country, its inhabitants, and its government, strive to be a light unto the nations. Amen.