

Rabbi David Wolkenfeld  
29 Iyyar 5775  
May 18, 2015

Benediction at the Inaugurations of the Mayor and City Government

God on High

Your servant, Jeremiah, taught us to pray for peace in the city where we live and to “pray to God on its behalf, for in its peace, shall you have peace.”<sup>1</sup>

וְדַרְשׁוּ אֶת־שְׁלוֹם הָעִיר אֲשֶׁר הִגַּלְתִּי אֶתְכֶם שָׁמָּה וְהִתְפַּלְלוּ בְעֵדָה אֱלֹהֵי כִּי בְשְׁלוֹמָהּ יִהְיֶה לְכֶם שְׁלוֹם:

And so, in fulfillment of that prophetic message, we pray this morning that your blessing of peace rest upon this city.

We have come to this city from 50 states and 100 lands. We came here to live, to work, to study, to find opportunity, and to escape danger. We live in crowded apartments, and spacious townhouses, in basement studios, and in high-rise condominiums. And together we acknowledge, “for in its peace, you shall have peace.” For the welfare of each and every resident of this city is a prerequisite for the welfare of each and every resident of this city.

“*Dirshu*” in Biblical Hebrew does not only mean to pray, it also means to seek.

Look out from your holy dwelling place above and bless us with the will and the patience to seek out and search for peace in every corner of this city. Open our ears that we may hear the voices of the silent. Open our eyes that we may see those who had been invisible. Open our hearts and our hands that we may give to our neighbors in need.

“*Dirshu*” can also mean to demand. Grant us the courage to hold one another accountable to act always in the common good. May those who have been chosen by the citizens of this city to lead us and to govern be granted the opportunity to fulfill their missions with integrity and with success.

Reward all of our public servants who have dedicated their lives to promoting the common good.

God on High

Give strength, health, and vigor to the mayor and to the entire elected leadership of this city as they take on an awesome and admirable responsibility. And strengthen their own families to care for those who care for us.

Grant the residents of this city the curiosity, initiative, and decency to reach out to one another in partnership and to build this city together.

וַיְהִי | נָעַם אֶ-דַּנְי אֶ-לֵהֵינוּ וּמַעֲשֵׂה יָדֵינוּ כּוֹנֵנָה עַלֵינוּ וּמַעֲשֵׂה יָדֵינוּ כּוֹנֵנָה:

“May God’s favor be upon us. let the work of our hands prosper, O prosper the work of our hands.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Jeremiah 29:7

<sup>2</sup> Psalms 90:17