

“Peace Sunday”

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The Bible, the Five Books of Moses, The Torah, one and the same. In every synagogue, everywhere the Torah is read in some cases every day, we read it every week, but we all read the same passages at the same time. Every Parsha, or portion is assigned weekly and for an entire year we read the Torah from end to end making a perfect circle. When do we stop reading the Torah? Never. When we finish the last paragraph of Deuteronomy where Moses dies on Mr. Nebo at the age of 120 ,we begin again with Barahsheet, In the Beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The word “peace” is repeated over and over again, for it is the central thought along with the “oneness” of God. How long have we longed for peace? We are still searching for this today. Our prayer Hahs-key-vay-nu which means Divine Providence that we say at every Shabbat Service says “Let there be love and understanding among us; let peace and friendship be our shelter from life’s storms. Eternal God, help us to walk with good companions, to live with hope in our hearts and eternity in our thoughts, that we may lie down in peace and rise up to find our hearts waiting to do your will. May our worship on this day help us to grow in loyalty to our covenant with you, and to the way of life it demands; the way of gentleness and justice, the path of truth and of peace.”

In today’s world, a world torn by violence, pain and war, a world far from wholeness, a world waiting still to be redeemed we who assemble here today can make a difference. It is a small beacon of hope that people just like us are doing this very same thing and that one day our voices will rise above the frey, and make a real effort to end the madness. In my lifetime I have not known a lasting peace. I so want this for my children and grandchildren and for the great grandson my wife and I will be welcoming early next year. Let my life not have been in vain. Let us pray for a just and compassionate society where all men can life with dignity and hope in their hearts. A day when all men will be free to worship in the way they wish without fear.

So grant us peace your most precious gift, O Eternal source of peace, and give us the will to proclaim its’ message to all the peoples of the earth. May the love of your name hallow every home and every heart. May it be your will to cause war and bloodshed to vanish from the earth, to let a great and

wondrous peace prevail in all the world. So never again shall we train for war. We praise you O God, the source of peace.

A few weeks ago at our annual Thanksgiving interfaith service I read a prayer that I think is appropriate to read here today.

O God, You have called us to peace, for You are Peace itself. May we have the vision to that each of us, in some measure, can help to realize these aims:

Where there are ignorance and superstition,  
Let there be enlightenment and knowledge.

Where there are prejudice and hatred,  
Let there be confidence and trust.

Where there are tyranny and oppression,  
Let there be freedom and justice.

Where there are poverty and disease,  
Let there be prosperity and health.

Where there are strife and discord,  
Let there be harmony and peace.

O God, we pray today for an everlasting peace throughout the world where all men and people of all faiths and religions can live together in peace and harmony forever. Amen