



Rabbis for Human Rights - North America

Do Justice and Right. רבנים למען זכויות האדם – צפון אמריקה

A Prayer for International Human Rights Day

Rabbi Brant Rosen

Ruach Kol Chai - Spirit of All that Lives:

Help us.

Help us to uphold the values that are so central to whom we are: human beings created *B'tzelem Elohim*- in the image of God. Help us to recognize that the inherent dignity of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world. The inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family are the foundations of freedom, justice and peace in the world. May we find the strength to protect and plead the cause of the stranger among us, to ensure just treatment for all who dwell in our land.

Guide us.

Guide us toward one law. One justice. One human standard of behavior toward all. Move us away from the equivocation that honors the divine image in some but not in others. Let us forever affirm that the justice we purport to hold dear is nothing but a sham if it does not uphold the value of *K'vod Habriot* - basic human dignity for all who dwell in our midst.

Forgive us.

Forgive us for the inhumane manner in which we too often treat the other. We know, or should, that when it comes to crimes against humanity, some of us may be guilty, but all of us are responsible. Grant us *kapparah* - atonement for the misdeeds of exclusion we invariably commit against the most vulnerable members of society: the unwanted, the unhoused, the uninsured, the undocumented.

Strengthen us.

Strengthen us to find the wherewithal to shine your light into the dark places of our world. Give us ability to uncover those who are hidden from view, locked away, forgotten. Let us never forget that nothing is hidden and no one lost from before you. Embolden us in the knowledge that *neshamot* - human souls are neither disposable nor replaceable; that we can never, try as we might, lock away the humanity of another.

Remind us.

Remind us of our duty to create a just society right here, right now, in our day. Give us the vision of purpose to guard against the complacency of the comfortable - and the resolve in knowing that we cannot put off the cause of justice and freedom for another day. Remind us that the time is now. Now is the moment to create your kingdom here on earth.

Ken Yehi Ratzon. May it be your will. And may it be ours.

And let us say, *Amen.*