

Blessings and Readings for L'Taken Seminars

“The Rabbis followed the psalmist’s view that ‘The earth is God’s and the fullness thereof, the world and they dwell therein.’ God is therefore everywhere, apt to break in upon us at any moment- in fullness of a spring blossom, the raw force of a thunderstorm or a memory in the march of time. Rather than let such moments pass unrecognized, the Rabbis outfitted Judaism with blessings, a simple but eloquent genre of appreciation for life’s special moments.”

-Hoffman, Lawrence. Israel: A Spiritual Travel Guide

Below is a list of blessings and readings that can help you to transform seemingly mundane events during the L'Taken Seminar into sacred moments for your students.

Safe Travel to and from Washington DC:

יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ יְהוָה אֱ-לֹהֵינוּ וְאֵ-לֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ, שְׁתּוֹלִיכֵנוּ לְשָׁלוֹם וְתַצְעִידֵנוּ לְשָׁלוֹם. וְתַסְמְכֵנוּ לְשָׁלוֹם. וְתַדְרִיכֵנוּ לְשָׁלוֹם. וְתַגִּיעֵנוּ לְמַחֲזֵז הַפְּצִנֵנוּ לְחַיִּים וְלִשְׂמֵחָה וְלִשְׁלוֹם וְתַצִּילֵנוּ מִכָּל אֲוִיב וְאֲוִירב וְלִסְטִים וְחַיּוֹת רָעוֹת בְּדַרְךְ וּמִכָּל מִינֵי פּוֹרְעָנִיּוֹת הַמְתַּרְגְּשׁוֹת לְבּוֹא לְעוֹלָם וְתִשְׁלַח בְּרָכָה בְּכֹל מַעֲשֵׂה יָדֵינוּ, וְתַתְּנֵנוּ לַחֵן וְלִקְסֵד וְלִרְחֻמִּים בְּעֵינֶיךָ וּבְעֵינֵי כָּל רוֹאֵינוּ וְתִשְׁמַע קוֹל תַּחֲנוּנֵינוּ. כִּי אֵ-ל שׁוֹמֵעַ תְּפִלָּה וְתַחֲנוּן אַתָּה: בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, שׁוֹמֵעַ תְּפִלָּה.

Y'bi ratz'on milfanekha A-donai E-lobeinu ve-lobei avoteinu she-tolikhenu l'shalom v'tatz'idenu l'shalom v'tadrikhenu l'shalom, v'tagi'enu limboz heftzenu l'hayim ul-simba ul-shalom. V'tatzilenu mi-kaf kol oyev v'orev v'listim v'hayot ra'ot ba-derekh, u-mi-kol minei pur'anivot ha-mitrag'shot la-vo la-olam. V'tishlah b'rakha b'khol ma'a'se yadeinu v'tit'nenu l'ben ul-besed ul-rabamim b'einekha uv-einei khol ro'einu. V'tishma kol tabanuneinu ki E-l sho'me'a t'fila v'tabanun ata. Barukh ata A-donai sho'me'a t'fila.

May it be your will, our God and God of our ancestors,
that You lead us in peace and help us reach our destination
safely, joyfully and peacefully.

May You protect us on our leaving and on our return,
and rescue us from any harm,
and may You bless the work of our hands,
and may our deeds merit honor for You.
Praise to You, Adonai, Protector of Israel.

Participating in an Act of Social Justice

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵנוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוֵּנוּ לְרִדּוֹף צֶדֶק.

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam asher kidsbanu b'mitz'votav v'tzivanu lir'dof tzedek

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the universe, who hallows us with your mitzvot and commands us to pursue justice.

Before Lobbying

ברוך אתה יהוה אלהנו מלך העולם אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו בצרכי צבור.

Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu melech baolamashev kidshanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu la'asok b'tzorchai tzibur.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the universe, who sanctifies us through *mitzvot* and has commanded us to engage in the needs of the community.

After Visiting the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

“Here on the town square of our national life ... at Eisenhower Plaza on Raoul Wallenberg Place, we dedicated the United States Holocaust Museum, and so bind one of the darkest lessons in history to the hopeful soul of America. As we have seen already today, this museum is not for the dead alone, nor even for the survivors who have been so beautifully represented; it is perhaps most of all for those of us who were not there at all. To learn the lessons, to deepen our memories and our humanity, and to transmit these lessons from generation to generation.”

President Bill Clinton at the Dedication of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

April 22, 1993

ברוך אתה יהוה אלהנו מלך העולם זוכר הנשכחות.

Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu melech ha'olam zokher hanishkhot.

Blessed are you, Adonai our God, Ruler of the Universe who remembers.

Standing in a Place of Governance

We pray for all who hold positions of leadership and responsibility in our national life. Let Your blessing rest upon them, and make them responsive to Your will, so that our nation may be to the world an example of justice and compassion.

Deepen our love for our country and our desire to serve it. Strengthen our power of self-sacrifice for our nation's welfare. Teach us to uphold its good name by our own right conduct.

Cause us to see clearly that the well-being of our nation is in the hands of all its citizens: imbue us with zeal for the cause of liberty in our own land and in all lands. And help us always to keep our homes safe from affliction, strife, and war. Amen

(Gates of Repentance, CCAR Press)

ברוך אתה יהוה אלהנו מלך העולם, אוהב צדקה ומשפט.

Baruch atah Adonai melech o-bev tzdakah oo-mishpat

Blessed are You Sovereign God, Who loves righteousness and justice.

Before the Study of Torah:

ברוך אתה יהוה אלהנו מלך העולם אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו

לעסוק בדברי תורה.

Baruch atah Adonai, elohenu melech ha'olam asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu la'asok b'divrei Torah.

Blessed are you, Adonai Our God, Ruler of the universe, who has made us holy with commandments and commanded us to engage in the study of Torah