

Two prayers for Birmingham leading up to the Commonwealth Games

We pray for a safe city:

In Jeremiah 29 Jeremiah brings a word from God to the exiles in Babylon. They were told they would be in Babylon for 70 years. For those of us in Birmingham, wherever we have come from, God has bought us here and He speaks to us as He did to His people

v.7 Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you (into exile), and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.

And with the prayer comes a promise

v.11 For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope

Father God, thank you that as we look at the news about Birmingham, the crime, the poverty, you have not abandoned us. Together we cry out to you for the peace of this city of Birmingham in which you have caused us to live. For peace on our streets and peace in our communities. You have established your people in this city to be salt and light, we take up your call to go in and take the land, and we seek the peace and welfare of Birmingham that there will be a future and a hope.

Jesus, you disarmed all the principalities and powers through the cross (Col. 3:15) and have them and every name that can be named beneath your feet.

Father God, you have raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, (Eph. 2:6) thereby giving us his authority. Jesus said *"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."* Matt 28:18

And so in Jesus' name we stand united together in the Lord and in His mighty power (Eph 6:10) against all religious, cultural, and demonic strongholds in Birmingham. All the strongholds and mindsets that set themselves up against the knowledge of God. (2 Cor 10:5). Therefore ...

- We stand against the enemy's schemes to bring disorder and every confusion,
- We stand against the spirit of lawlessness, against gross injustice and wickedness.
- We stand against the enemy's schemes to bring violence through terrorism, through gangs,
- We stand against the enemy's schemes to bring exploitation through human trafficking
- We therefore say you shall NOT come against this city and God's people. We declare freedom for our communities from pagan practises and false religions, from the gods of mammon and pride.

Father, your word says you send forth your angels in the service of believers (Hebrews 1:14) so we ask that you send angels to guard and protect this city. To close the gates to enemy activity.

And In Jesus name We speak protection over the Games, over the venues, the athletes, the visitors and across the city. We proclaim that *"The LORD is our rock, our fortress and our deliverer; that our God is our rock, in whom we take refuge, that he is our shield and the horn of our salvation, that he is our stronghold."* Psalm 18:2

We Bless our city:

"I have posted watchmen on your walls, Jerusalem; (Birmingham) they will never be silent day or night. You who call on the LORD, give yourselves no rest, and give him no rest till he establishes Jerusalem (Birmingham) and makes her the praise of the earth." Isaiah 62:7

"Through the blessing of the upright a city is exalted" Proverbs 11:11

"The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn his face toward you and give you peace." Numbers 6:24 -26

- We bless our city with God's peace, protection and deliverance from evil, with the truth that God is in control. *for dominion belongs to the Lord and he rules over the nations (Ps22:28)*
- Father, we pray for Birmingham to be transformed, *for your kingdom to come, for your will to be done, here in Birmingham as it is in heaven...* for protection for the vulnerable ... for justice and righteousness ... wisdom and discernment for the police ...
- We pray for Birmingham to be a city of compassion and welcome, a place of peace and a place of flourishing ... where people are safe on the streets.
- We release the destiny of our city to be the heart of the nation, give us a heart responsive to you in exchange for a hard heart. *"And I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit in you. I will take out your stony, stubborn heart and give you a tender, responsive heart."*

Ez. 36:26 NLT

Father, draw our city close to your heart in this year of Jubilee, as Birmingham welcomes the Commonwealth Games. We pray for a new story to begin, for your rivers of life to flow in our city through your mercy and grace. Amen