

Rosh Hashanah

Think of Rosh Hashanah like the stem cells of the year. They can become anything organic as they develop and grow.

The possibility that we have been given to impress upon the substance of time the shape and color that we wish it to have, is both an opportunity and a challenge to consciousness. The High Holiday Prayer Book asked us to pray to be inscribed in the book of life. We have an entire shopping list when we say : " our father our King -- Avinu Malkenu we need this, Avinu Malkenu that". Looking at that list we find that many things that we pray for so basic to life in general. However, there are many things meant we need for the coming year that could not have been in the mind of the people who composed the prayer. We need to prepare our own list of requests.

It is not enough to request something from God without making a container for God to fulfill that request. The container is made by our creating behavior vessels for those requests to be fulfilled. There are times when we pray for something like "grant us peace you the source of peace" without realizing that that was granted to us a long time ago and we have not yet taken advantage of it by creating the conditions and instruments to be able to receive the peace granted to us. We also have an opportunity to pray for ourselves and for the issues in our life.

One of the ways in which we create the container is to share our concerns and worries about the coming year with friends and family. This way we can clarify our values and our needs and create a vessel for mutual cooperation and support. When we say Avinu Malkenu we always use the plural. Creating such a plurality of caring loving for one another is a sure means to have God's benevolent Providence bless us and support us for the coming year.

The blowing of the shofar has always been seen as a wake-up call. In this current era of our life we need to hear the outcry of our planet, our mother the Earth who aches for her children.

According to Hasidic teaching something happens in cosmic dimensions: each year on Rosh Hashanah the divine decision to reign over the cosmos has to be re-instigated by people who reach out to the attribute of the divine kingship and Majesty. Consider this: it is our prayer that stimulates the divine will to continue to energize the entire cosmos. It touches not only the life on this planet. Imagine then: our reaching out to be connected with and governed by the will of the Creator is what makes for a strong reality in which divine Providence can manifest from divine generosity.

So blowing the shofar and our listening with an open heart establishes that connection in which our will to be governed by the divine intent for life.

And it is unlikely that we would be well prepared for that moment to be so open to send our intent along when hearing the shofar blast unless we begin our earlier, before the high

holy days during the month of Ellul. The preparation begins with the examination of our conscience in relation to our activities in the last year. I find it good to have conversations with some soul friends before the high holy days, during the month of Ellul. Sharing the in the preparation with them given much greater reality and brings about the good results that we wish to have for the coming year.