



Dear Friends,

So much has happened in our lives over this past year. We have seen so many changes, each bringing with it a new set of challenges.

Change is like a train barreling at full speed towards its destination. You can't stop it on a dime. You might be able to slow it down, but it takes a lot of preparation and planning to do so.

But the High Holidays give us an opportunity to evaluate how we are reacting to those changes in our lives. This introspection may take place on both a personal and a communal level. For example, some of us may have lost a loved one, or moved residences, or changed jobs. Others may have experienced a sickness, or have had to care for someone whose health has declined. Some of us have had kids start new schools, or have had good friends move away from us. The list goes on, and each one of us has our own, personal set of changes that we have had to confront.

On a communal level, all of us are coming to terms with the rise of antisemitism in our communities. We've had to adapt to new security procedures at the temple. We've watched as support for Israel, around the world and in our own country, has waned considerably over this past year.

Change is part of our Jewish genetic code, ever since God called out to Abraham to leave the only home he has ever known and go to a land that God is going to show him. Moses began his life in the royal court of Pharaoh, his adopted father, only to be called by God to return to his people and lead them to freedom. Leap ahead a few thousand years, and our grandparents had similar experiences, leaving countries on the other side of the world and adapting to new surroundings, new cultures, and a new language.

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks once taught, "If you remember where you come from, where you are going to, and why, you can handle change because you have a map of values that don't change." Our circumstances might change, but Judaism teaches that our values don't. It's with this understanding that we come together for the holidays in a spirit of reflection, seeking guidance in how we should move forward in navigating our lives. At the same time, we support each other through the changes we've experienced this past year, providing comfort to the mourner, smiling at the friend you haven't seen in some time, or just sitting in the pews in silent meditation, knowing that the person sitting next to you is likely doing the same thing.

Let's pray that we each experience a sweet and meaningful new year.

L'shanah tovah!

Rabbi Rosenkranz



Dear Friends,

As we stand before the gates of a new year, it is our community that is foremost in my heart. Each of us arrives carrying our own loves and losses, hopes and disappointments, yearnings and fears. Yet together, we gather with courage to begin anew.

The piercing call of the shofar is more than an ancient sound. It is an invitation to awaken and to reflect on where we have been, where we are today, and who we hope to become. While its call reaches each of us personally, it is heard most powerfully together as one kehillah kedosha, one sacred community.

Whether you come seeking reflection, inspiration, comfort, healing, or simply the familiar embrace of your Temple Beth Torah family, know that you belong. Come hear the shofar. Come lift your voice in prayer and song. Join us as we open our hearts and begin the New Year together.

L'shanah tovah! May you and your loved ones be inscribed and sealed for a good year.

With prayers for peace, safety, and wellbeing,

Cantor Rachel Harris

