



Rosh HaShanah Prayer, 5783

Rabbi Emeritus John Friedman

September 26th, 2022

Adonai Elohim, from year-to-year we gather to recall our hopes for the fellowships and institutions we love; that mean the most to us: Our family, our nation, our synagogue, and the State of Israel. And we add another this year because belated concern demands its attention: I refer to our planet, and all its features, upon which we, our children and our generations, depend. Thoughts of the perils that today threaten these foundations of our lives wake us at night and interrupt our afternoons.

Oh God, in 5783, grant us wisdom to care for our planet more fervently and to sustain it. Help us to labor for the well-being of future generations, that the blessings of Climate, Forest, animal life, clean air, and water security, may be accessible to our children and theirs. May we apply ourselves anew and oppose waste and purposeless destruction of your creation. In the year to come, help us to see ourselves as advocates for our world. Amen

Eternal One, I have never felt this way about our country. I recall moments of crises and deep anxiety during my lifetime, wars and threats menacing America's Future. But I have never felt or heard a warning such as that expressed by our president: "Our democracy faces grave danger." In earlier moments of anxiety about our democracy, when Americans grew anxious over corrupt politics and over-concentrated economic power, reforms followed. We passed civil-service regulations, new political structures, and laws to protect our rights and safety. At this moment I am gratified at some of the good laws our congress has supported. Yet it is not clear what will transpire in our courts or from our next election. So, Eternal One, we beseech you to help us bring continued hope and sensibility to our nation that our confidence may be strengthened and that we may fix things and make them better. (And on behalf of my wife, Nan Friedman, Lord, "Please give us faith that our votes and those of our friends and children of age, may bring hope to our nation.) Amen.

Oh God, help us. . . help Israel, our incredible Jewish state. Show us the importance of opposing Settlement expansion, demolitions of Palestinian homes, denial of access to water, and other forms of annexation that are designed to entrench the occupation, prevent the creation of a Palestinian State, and thus make it impossible for Israelis and Palestinians to reach a peaceful resolution to their conflict. And Lord, one more thing about this item. We need help. Jews do not agree. We therefore require political leaders in Washington who understand and truly care for Israel: Not candidates for whom Israel is a money maker or a vote getter, but leaders who long for peace for Israel and all her neighbors.

And one more request, Eternal God. Our synagogue has struggled during the recent and persisting pandemic. Our hard-working rabbi, staff and congregational leadership have responded in an exemplary way: juggling the rules on which we operate. For a while some of us have prayed on the zoom and rejoiced at Shabbat dinner...all at the same time. It was not too bad, but we want to see our friends, to greet and hug each other in our sanctuary, regularly. So,



give us a vacation from Covid and other pandemics, that we may further enrich our worship and study opportunities—even without the benefit of high technology. In 5783, bring us hope. *Baruch Atah Adonai, Oseh HaShalom*. Amen.