

# Try Prayer and See

By Dr. Samuel Silver

# New Year Leftover

By Ben Nathan

Do you think that prayer can change things? The question is often asked. The answer is probably that prayer can not change things, but that it can change enough so that we will go out and change things. For, one of the marvels of life is our ability to change. Some do not believe we are capable of altering our lives.

We often hear people say: "You know how human nature is. And as long as human nature is the way it is, there will always be war and troubles in the world."

Or we ourselves are prone to say sometimes, when we are chided for some fault or when we think about it: "Well, that's the way I am," or: "That's the way I'm made." The notion that we are made in such a way and that therefore we are unable to improve disregards the power we often display to become a bit different, to grow out of our shortcomings, to rise to a higher level of conduct.

One of the greatest miracles worked by God is the capacity He has given us to grow, to grow out of our faults, if only we try hard enough. True, it can't be done instantaneously. But if we work at it we can become better, more considerate, more restrained, more skillful.

And prayer is the beginning of the process. When we pray and acknowledge our indebtedness to God and seek to attune our will to His, we begin the slow, upward march to liberation from our follies, our faults, and our shortcomings.

So let us pray often and then so something about our prayers so that we will fulfill the urgings within us implanted by Almighty God.

(Ben Nathan is the pen name of a young American poet who has been a frequent contributor to our holiday editions.)

Here we are again. We are standing on a peak at the top of a new year. The last three hundred and sixty five days are linked to the irretrievable past. Nothing can now be gained from them, nothing but memory and that residue we like to call experience.

None the less we are glad that they are over, glad that they are over and that we are still alive and able to look back at them. Contrarily, the three hundred and sixty-five days ahead of us are utterly open, utterly free, utterly subject to what the Lord makes new, vital and unexpected.

There is no telling what these days will yield, whether the crop will prove thick or the crop will prove thin, whether the cattle will multiply or whether the herd will diminish, whether the fruitbearing tree will prosper and bear eighteen bushels or not prosper and bear one.

However freely we fancy we can foresee, we can in fact. According to the sages, only Torah will yield the meaning and only Torah will unravel the symbol. And it is to awaken us to this admonition that the shofar is sounded on the new moon of the seventh month.

Concerning the blowing of the shofar that day Maimonides assets: "The Scriptural injunction of the Shofar for the New Year's Day has a profound meaning. It says: Awake, ye sleepers, and ponder over your deeds; remember your Creator and go back to Him in penitence. Be not of those who miss realities in their pursuit of shadows and waste their years in seeking after vain things which cannot profit or deliver. Look well to your souls and consider your acts; forsake each of you his evil ways and thoughts, and return to God so that He may have mercy on you."

What else is Maimonides saying? He is saying that the shofar blows on Rosh Hashana to awaken us to the implications of the year before us, of the time - stretch we now face. Though in that time stretch there will be many stories for all of us to observe in it too there is great opportunity not only for interpretation but for action, since our actions are largely what make those stories and fashion them to turn out as they do. Hence, when the shofar blows it is to awaken us to the consciousness that in the year before us there is both a way to wisdom and to folly.

So take care of this time, that time and the other time and have the happiest time ever -- this year too!

NEW YORK (WNS) The Belfer Graduate School of Science of Yeshiva University has received a grant of \$144,430 from the National Science Foundation, it was disclosed by the dean of the school, Dr. Abe Gelbart, who said the grant will make it possible for some 400 junior and senior high school mathematics and science teachers year 1968-69.

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