

Prayer at the Start of a New Year - 5774

By Rabbi Michael Z. Cahana

Adonai our G-d, we humbly come before you on the cusp of this day. As our New Year of 5774 begins, we should be free to rejoice. But we recognize how we human beings have failed you this year. We failed to live up to the dreams of our potential. We each have missed the mark, and the Days of Awe takes us on a journey of reflection and renewal. For this we are grateful and pledge to use this time well.

But before our personal challenge is met we must recognize our communal failure. We have been heartless, greedy and short-sighted. Human induced Global Climate Change continues unabated. War, famine and anguish rage with little more than pious words to combat them. And we have stood idly by as the most terrible of human weapons has been unleashed on innocent civilians. All in our sight. We cannot pretend we did not know.

As we enter this New Year, we pray for our leaders to have the courage and conviction to stand up to these global failings, to speak clearly that some things simply cannot be tolerated. May we, as we enter this New Year, have the vision to see the world through G-d's eyes – not as it is, but as it should be. May we have the personal courage and conviction to change what is broken in the world and in ourselves.