

RABBI'S MESSAGE

23 Prayers for the New Year, 2023

For those of us born more than 23 years ago, it seems daunting that we are so deep into a new century. 23 is known as a “prime number,” because of its unique characteristic of not being divisible by any other number other than 1. 23 is the ninth prime number, and there are 25 primes in the first 100 numbers of counting. Why is this important? I’m not sure! But as we welcome a New Year as a “prime” year, perhaps we can find unique ways to make it special. With that in mind, I offer 23 prayers, rather than resolutions. Resolutions are individual. Prayers often rely on help from divine as well as human resources. This is my list for the New Year...want to think about yours?

Dear God: *With Your Divine help, and added wisdom from those around me, I pray:*

1. To be able to recognize my strengths and use them wisely;
2. To understand my limitations and work within them;
3. To truly listen to what the world is teaching;
4. To truly listen to the hearts of those in need;
5. To be truly heard when I speak from my own heart;
6. To understand and utilize the power and importance of silence;
7. To learn something new each day, and to recognize learning from unexpected sources;
8. For those who struggle with illness, addictions and disabilities to find healthy paths to living full lives;
9. For those who struggle with issues of identity to find the Divine Self within;
10. For those with economic struggles to be able to find needed resources;
11. To appreciate the many blessings, both obvious ones and hidden ones;
12. To see difficult challenges as opportunities for growth;
13. To exercise my mind, body and spirit regularly to keep each healthy and challenged;
14. To rest and rejuvenate regularly;
15. To be patient with those I hold dear, and be even more patient with those with whom I have been impatient;
16. To find new ways to honor elders so they can age with dignity and grace;
17. To find new ways to honor young people, so they can grow with safety and confidence;
18. To see mistakes – both my own and those of others – as opportunities to learn and grow;
19. To find the inner motivation that will help me to inspire others;
20. To listen to points of view that differ from my own, and respect that I don’t have to try change someone’s mind in order to be true to my own principles;
21. To give freely what I am able to give without expectations of reciprocation;
22. To embrace whatever mysteries the new year brings;
23. To express my gratitude and love often.

This list is only a beginning. As the new year continues, I hope to revisit my list and expand upon it. We all begin a new year with hopes, dreams, wishes and prayers. Let’s journey together.

L’shalom,

Rabbi Dan Gordon