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Yeshiva University
Office of the President

My Dear Friends,

As we approach the holiest day of the year, we come to Hashem with our faults and failures, and pray for a year of blessing. Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook suggests that in addition to soul searching for sins, we should also list and reinforce the positive actions that reflect our core values. This year perhaps more than past years, these collective qualities have been on clear display.



See video above for viduy on the mitzvot we did this year

In my mind's eye, I think of Hashem greeting our tefillot this year with the enormous compassion of a father who has bore witness to the tears and anguish of a child who has suffered deeply and risen to a great challenge that is still ongoing. Rather than search for details of flaws, Hashem is overwhelmed by the sacrifice and commitment of the Jewish people to each other and to our homeland. In my imagination, Hashem consoles his children by gently whispering to them the covenantal promise in which times of challenge will give birth to days of glory.

While we cannot presume the thoughts of the Holiest one of all, we can assume this same gentle posture to our children and families on these days of forgiveness. Let us be even more understanding to each other, reach out even more to those whom we love, express our gratitude to those who fill our lives with joy and meaning.

May Hashem bless you and your family with a new year filled with mazel and good health, happiness and much success.

My warmest well wishes for a Gmar Chatima Tova,

Rabbi Dr. Ari Berman
President, Yeshiva University



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