

# ASK A JEW A QUESTION...

*by Rabbi Shimon Apisdorf*

Jewish thinking relates to holidays as far more than commemorations of past events. Rosh Hashanah is certainly more than a Jewish January first.

The essential opportunity of Rosh Hashanah is to clarify for ourselves what our truest, "bottom line" priorities are in life. No time is more appropriate than today for asking ourselves some basic questions in order to clarify—and remind ourselves—what is truly important to us and who we ultimately want to be.

To reflect on some of the following questions is quite apropos on this, the day of judgment:

1. When do I most feel that my life is meaningful?
2. How often do I express my feelings to those who mean the most to me?
3. Are there any ideals I would be willing to die for?
4. If I could live my life over, would I change anything?
5. What would bring me more happiness than anything else in the world?
6. What are my three most significant achievements since last Rosh Hashanah?
7. What are the three biggest mistakes I've made since last Rosh Hashanah?
8. What project or goal, if left undone, will I most regret next Rosh Hashanah?
9. If I knew I couldn't fail, what would I undertake to accomplish in life?
10. What are my three major goals in life?
11. What am I doing to achieve them?
12. What practical steps can I take in the next two months toward these goals?
13. If I could give my children only three pieces of advice, what would they be?
14. What is the most important decision I need to make this year?
15. What important decision did I avoid making last year?
16. What did I do last year that gave me the strongest feeling of self-respect?
17. When do I feel closest to God?
18. Do I have a vision of where I want to be one, three and five years from now?
19. What are the most important relationships in my life?
20. Over the last year did those relationships become closer and deeper or was there a sense of stagnation and drifting?
21. What can I do to nurture those relationships this year?
22. If I could change only one thing about myself, what would that be?

23. If I could change one thing about my spiritual life, what would it be?

On a scale of one to five (five being the highest), how important are the following to you? You cannot have more than three fives or three fours, and you must have at least two threes, two twos and two ones.

1. Family
2. Being well educated
3. Making a contribution to my community
4. Marriage
5. Spirituality
6. Being well liked
7. Having a good reputation
8. Financial success
9. Being Jewish
10. Peer recognition in my career or profession
11. Personal fulfillment
12. Helping other people
13. Having a good Jewish education
14. Making a contribution to humanity
15. Achieving peace of mind
16. Having children
17. Living in the home of my dreams
18. Acquiring self-knowledge
19. Giving my children a strong Jewish identity