

## **Before Unetaneh Tokef – Who Shall Live and Who Shall Die**

I see you standing there alone

eyes searching through the blankness  
of a year stretching limitlessly on like a  
book waiting to be written.

Don't bother glancing behind.  
Don't pretend you're unaware  
that in a year's time  
a world can be shattered  
or born anew.

Just gaze forward  
and we'll ask the questions together:  
Will it be a year of curse  
or a year of blessing?  
Of wounding or  
of healing?

Throw open your hands and  
let your hopes and fears fly out  
past the blank pages  
of a year yet to be.  
Dare to believe that we will all  
be written for blessing in  
the Book of Sweet, Sweet Life.

Now close your eyes and we'll send off  
this one audacious prayer:  
May the new year bless us  
with health, wholeness,  
and peace.

(Rabbi Brant Rosen)