

SHOFAR THOUGHTS

10 Ideas to Consider During Shofar Blowing



אע"פ שתקיעת שופר בראש השנה גזירת הכתוב רמז יש בו כלומר: עורו ישנינים משנתכם ונרדמים הקיצו מתרדמתכם וחפשו במעשיכם וחזרו בתשובה וזכרו בוראכם אלו השוכחים את האמת בהבלי הזמן... והטיבו דרכיכם ומעלליכם ויעזוב כל אחד מכם דרכו הרעה ומחשבתו אשר לא טובה... (רמב"ם הלכות תשובה ג:ד)

Even though the sounding of the shofar on Rosh HaShanah is a decree from God, it still contains a personal message: It is as if the shofar's call is telling us, "AWAKEN FROM YOUR SLUMBER! Examine your actions, return to your true selves, and remember your Creator. Those who forget the truth in the vanities of time... Look inside yourselves. Improve your ways and your actions, and abandon the negativity in your life..."

- Rambam, Laws of Teshuva 3:4



IT IS CUSTOMARY TO SOUND **TRUMPETS** AT THE CORONATION OF A NEW KING. THE SHOFAR OF ROSH HASHANA IS HOW WE RECOGNIZE AND ACCEPT **GOD'S KINGSHIP**.



JUST AS A KING MAY PROCLAIM A PERIOD OF FORGIVENESS BEFORE HE PUNISHES WRONGDOERS, SO TOO, THE SHOFAR BLAST PROCLAIMS, "**WHOEVER WISHES TO REPENT - LET THEM DO SO NOW**. IF THEY DO NOT, THEY CANNOT COMPLAIN LATER."



AT MOUNT SINAI WHEN THE JEWS ACCEPTED THE TORAH, "THE SOUND OF THE SHOFAR CONTINUALLY INCREASED AND WAS VERY GREAT" (EXODUS 19:19). ON ROSH HASHANA, THE SHOFAR REMINDS US TO **RENEW OUR COMMITMENT TO TORAH**.



THE SHOFAR REMINDS US OF THE GREAT AND AWESOME FUTURE **DAY OF JUDGMENT**, WHICH ZEPHANIAH (1:16) DESCRIBES AS A DAY OF SHOFAR BLOWING AND SHOUTING.



THE SHOFAR, A RAM'S HORN, REMINDS US OF **AKEIDAS YITZCHAK, THE BINDING OF ISAAC** (SEE GENESIS 22), WHEN AVRAHAM SACRIFICED A RAM IN LIEU OF HIS SON. WE PRAY THAT THIS MEMORY SHOULD ASCEND BEFORE GOD FOR THE GOOD.



THE SHOFAR MAKES US YEARN FOR THE **INGATHERING OF THE EXILES** OF WHICH WILL BE ACCOMPANIED BY THE BLAST OF THE SHOFAR (SEE ISAIAH 27:13).



THE SOUND OF THE SHOFAR INSPIRES **FEAR AND TREMBLING** IN THE HEARTS OF ALL WHO HEAR IT - AS THE PROPHET ASKS, "CAN A SHOFAR BE BLOWN IN A CITY, AND THE PEOPLE NOT TREMBLE?" (AMOS 3:6).



THE SHOFAR RECALLS THE **RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD**, WHICH WILL BE ACCOMPANIED BY THE SOUNDING OF A SHOFAR (SEE ISAIAH 18:3).



IN BIBLICAL TIMES, WHEN PROPHETS WOULD CALL FOR SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION AND **REPENTANCE**, THEIR CRIES WERE ACCOMPANIED BY A SHOFAR (SEE EZEKIEL 33:2-3).



THE SHOFAR REMINDS US TO PRAY FOR THE **REBUILDING OF THE DESTROYED HOLY TEMPLE**, OF WHICH THE PROPHET (JEREMIAH 4:19-20) LAMENTED: "I SHALL NOT BE SILENT, FOR THE SOUND OF THE SHOFAR HAVE YOU HEARD, O MY SOUL, THE SHOUT OF WAR. DESTRUCTION UPON DESTRUCTION HAS BEEN PROCLAIMED..."

