

# Hear the Call. Heed the Call.



## A Meditation on the Sounding of the Shofar

"It will be a day of sounding for you – *Yom Teruah yih'yeh la-chem*," our tradition says.

At this High Holiday season, we sound the shofar, the ram's horn, to awaken our hearts and minds to the work of these days – the work of reflection, of atonement, of renewal.

The shofar's plaintive wailing and piercing cries ask us to pay attention to those who live at the margins: the world's nearly 120 million displaced people.

We hear the shofar calling us to our most deeply held values: to compassion, to welcome, to justice.

But it is not enough to merely hear the shofar. The Psalmist tells us that we are to know the sound of the shofar. To know the sound of the shofar is to heed its invitation to act on our values.

We heed the shofar's call when we take action for the world's refugees and asylum seekers, those whose lives are in danger for being who they are.

We heed the shofar's call when we ensure that refugees and asylum seekers have pathways and resources to rebuild their lives in safety and with dignity.

We heed the shofar's call when we speak out against anti-immigrant and anti-refugee sentiment, standing in solidarity with the oppressed – neighbor and stranger alike.

That is what it means to know the shofar's call – not only to hear it but also to heed it.

We move from *tekiyah* – the first call of the shofar – to *tekiyah gedolah* – the great, final blast – by joining our voices, demanding that fear and racism are replaced with understanding and righteousness.

Like the twists and curves of the ram's horn, the path forward is winding and sometimes uncertain. However the path unfolds, though, the sound of the shofar is clear as it stirs our souls.

*Yom Teruah yih'yeh lanu* – it is a day of sounding for us. May the sound of the shofar and the sound of our voices lifted together announce to all those seeking refuge that they are respected, protected, and welcomed.