

## Reflections on September 11, An *Elul* Reading

The tenth anniversary of September 11th falls on the 12th day of the Hebrew month of Elul. Elul is a month dedicated to introspection and stocktaking as we prepare for the High Holy Days. During Elul we have an opportunity to reflect on the previous year and consider changes we would like to make in our lives. To help us with this endeavor, the shofar is sounded each morning during Elul -- harkening our attention, and our action.

On this tenth anniversary of 9/11, may the blast of the shofar serve as a sharp reminder of each of the 2,973 lives that were taken that day. May the shofar's sound echo like the sirens of the firefighters, police offices and first responders whose actions and sacrifice on 9/11 were extraordinary. May the shofar's blast help us appreciate the fragility of life.

On this tenth anniversary of 9/11, may the blast of the shofar serve as an alarm to us. May its sound remind us of our missteps this past year -- our biases, our prejudices, our own actions that may have made this world a less peaceful and tolerant place. May the shofar call us to heed our best instincts and act with compassion and love.

On this tenth anniversary of 9/11, may the blast of the shofar serve as a sound of comfort to all. To those wounded who continue to recover; to those who lost loved ones and friends; and to all whose hearts were broken by witnessing the pain of others.

May the sound of the shofar on the 12<sup>th</sup> day of *Elul* help us reflect on how our world has changed in the past decade and how it has remained the same. And let each of us individually and communally recommit ourselves to again make our world whole.

As the year 5771 draws to a close we reflect upon the year that was and the year that will be - where we have been and where we hope to be when the Days of Awe arrive. During these days of Elul, we pray that we may begin to repair the things we may have broken during the past year. And we pray that through these acts of *Teshuvah*, our world will become a more tolerant, just, and peaceful place. *May this be God's will.*