

Rosh Hashanah Chant

אֲשֵׁרֵי הָעַם יוֹדְעֵי תְרוּעָה יְהוָה בְּאוֹר-פְּנֵיךָ יִהְלְכוּן

Ashrei HaAm yodeya T'ruah Adonay B'or panecha y'haleychn (Psalm 89:16)

Oh God, Happy are the people who know the blast of the shofar;
they walk in the light of your presence.

What kind of “Happy” is this? Certainly not the happiness of superficial pleasure—a lifestyle of Denial that masks a terrible truth, and not the la-di-da happiness that keeps life bland and safe.

This is the kind of “happy” that is a dynamic force waiting quietly at our center, the deep joy for existence itself. The blast of the shofar can break open the shell that imprisons that inner joy. When that joy is freed, it becomes a light that shines regardless of circumstance. And that joy is our power. It is the power that moves us as “we walk in the light of God’s presence,” as we walk with integrity, courage, commitment, as we walk in beauty.

May the blast of the shofar shatter the rigid walls that imprison our true joy.
May the wail of the shofar open our hearts and send us with compassion to profound forgiveness.

May the call of the shofar inspire each of us to respond with our unique love as we rise to the challenge that is set before us this year.

This practice can be done as a dance of stillness and movement. As you chant *Ashrei HaAm yodeya T'ruah Adonay*, stand very still and listen, raising your arms to receive God’s presence with the word *Adonay*. Then, with the words *B'or panecha y'haleychn*, do a mindful walking meditation around the circle. This practice can be done as a round with two concentric circles.