



## “Israel’s Shofar Master At Work” (Pages 18-19)

### Ten Reasons for Sounding the Shofar

Below are ten reasons that Rabbi Saadia Gaon (who lived from 882-942 BCE) explained for the sounding of the *shofar*.

1. Rosh Hashanah is the birthday of the universe on which a new Ruler became sovereign over the world. The sound of the *shofar* is comparable to the horns that blast when a ruler is coronated. On Rosh Hashanah, the *shofar* is blown to acknowledge that God is the Ruler of the universe.
2. Rosh Hashanah marks the beginning of the Ten Days of Repentance. The *shofar* is blown to wake people up to do *teshuvah*.
3. According to tradition, when the Torah was given at Mount Sinai, blasts of the *shofar* filled the air. Blowing the *shofar* on Rosh Hashanah reminds us of our acceptance of the Torah and her *mitzvot*.
4. The sound of a *shofar* is like the voice of the prophets that rang like a siren warning the Jewish people to change their ways, to rectify their wrongdoings, and to return to God.
5. The sound of the *shofar* reminds us of the destruction of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem.
6. The *shofar*, made of a ram’s horn, is symbolic of the ram that Abraham sacrificed at the time of *Akeidat Yitzhak*, the binding of Isaac. The *shofar* is a reminder, then, of Abraham’s faithfulness and devotion to God.
7. The sound of the *shofar* causes people to tremble in fear.
8. The *shofar* is a reminder of the final Day of Judgment.
9. According to tradition, the *shofar* will be blown when all of Jewish exiles return to the land of Israel. The *shofar* reminds us of this eventual time of redemption.
10. According to tradition, the *shofar* will be sounded when God revives the dead.