



Partner. Connect with your local Rabbi for Repro member (email connect@ncjw.org to receive the most updated Rabbis for Repro Jewish clergy list), local Jewish communal organizations like the JCRC, JCC, and local congregations. The Sho-test will be most powerful if it's a Jewish communal-wide event across denominations and organizational affiliation. Remember that this is a *very* busy time for rabbis preparing for the High Holy Days, and that they likely will not have time for planning, but may be glad to co-sponsor an event, share an event listing with their community, or show up to play a defined role that does not require preparation on their part (i.e. "Will you blow the shofar?" or "Will you read this opening prayer or poem?" as opposed to, "Will you prepare some original remarks.")

Accessibility. Make sure that your gathering space is wheelchair accessible. Consider providing American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters, language interpretation, virtual attendance options, or other measures to ensure all who would like to attend are able.

Timing. While we are recommending you start at 8:00 am local time, choose a time of day that's best for your network and community. Check community calendars to avoid possible conflicts with other events aimed at a similar audience. While we're hoping for Sho-tests to occur during the Week of Action (September 12-16), please schedule yours whenever makes the most sense for your community in the lead up to Rosh Hashanah.

Location. We encourage you to hold this Sho-test at a recognizable public landmark in your community — a public courthouse, state legislature building, town square, key statue, well-known park — and to take lots of pictures and video.

Logistics. Consider practicalities like parking or public transportation. Check whether or not you need a permit for the gathering, and what banners or signs you want to make or order. We encourage you to print [these signs](#) (we recommend printing them heavy stock 100 lb minimum paper) or encourage people to bring homemade ones. Important logistical note: all communication should encourage attendees to bring a shofar, if they have one!

Documentation. Please share photos or videos on social media using the hashtag #ActForAbortion and send them to action@ncjw.org or upload them to [this folder](#).

The Sho-test ritual

Symbolism of the Shofar

Explain the meaning of shofar, why we blow it, connect back to losses of our reproductive freedom.

- The shofar, ram's horn, has been used to call the Jewish people for millennia. Whether it be in the spiritual or political realm, the blasts of the shofar have been used as a way to call the Jewish people to action.
- We are halfway through the Jewish month of Elul, the month before the new year marked by Rosh Hashanah. As part of our spiritual preparation to enter the High Holidays and the Days of Awe, we have a practice of blowing the shofar every day to wake us from our spiritual and emotional slumber and urge us to act.
- In the Jewish year 5782, we lost our legal right to abortion. As we approach Rosh Hashanah and the start of 5783, we must recommit to the fight for reproductive freedom for everyone.
- Today, we blow the shofar to remind us that reproductive freedom is a Jewish value. To bring us together in this holy work as we fight for every human being in this country – for our right to healthcare and community support, for our dignity and safety, for our bodily autonomy and self-determination.
- We are here because the State has no right to impose a narrow interpretation of one religion on a vast and diverse country. We are here because abortion justice is a racial justice issue, an economic justice issue, a gender justice issue, a voting rights issue, an immigration justice issue, a religious freedom issue, a disability justice issue, a health equity issue. We are here because abortion justice is a Jewish issue.
- We are here to rally, to break down the walls of harm, to proclaim that our work for liberty throughout the land will not cease until we have achieved liberty and reproductive justice for all.

Blowing of the Shofar

If this is your first time blowing shofar, here are some video tutorials:

[!\[\]\(a870788d6ed9b8fd294b7654a8c8526b_img.jpg\) Shofar tutorial 1: How to blow the shofar](#)

[!\[\]\(de95854c7ee024cfadc48187bbb781b2_img.jpg\) How to blow the shofar - with a special secret for beginners](#)

As we sound the shofar, we invite you to focus on its different sounds.

- **Tekiah** is an unbroken blast that is reminiscent both of an emergency siren and a trumpet coronating a monarch.
- **Shevarim** are the three medium blasts that call to mind fractures and brokenness. The word shevarim itself is translated as fractures.
- **Teruah** are nine short notes sounded in quick succession. They are urgent and frantic, a reminder that there is much to do.
- **Tekiah gedolah**, or literally “great tekiah,” is an elongated blast that completes a set of shofar blasts, acting as a spiritual alarm clock.

Let these shofar blasts awaken the deepest parts of our souls.

Let us hear and internalize its call to act.

Let us recommit to pursuing a justice that centers those most harmed.

Let us join together in community and in solidarity with others to protect and honor the right to safety, dignity and autonomy.

The leader calls, “Tekiyah!” And the shofar blower blows. Then they call, “Shevarim!” And the shofar blower blows. And then they call, “T’ruah!” And the shofar blower blows. Then they call, “Tekiya gedolah!!” and the shofar blower blows.

Allow everyone a moment or two of breathing and silence after that great noise before going to the closing.

Remarks

- As we approach Rosh Hashana, the beginning of a new year, we remember that an unjust legal decision has profoundly impacted the books in which a great many people will be inscribed—that sometimes it really is up to us to take action to alter the severity of the decree.
- Now more than ever, we need the Jewish community to show up and fight for this vital right, to bring our tradition’s wisdom and moral leadership, our thirst for justice and communal power to the fight for access to abortion for everyone.

Sample texts

עזרו יְשָׁנִים מִשְׁנֵיתֵכֶם וְנִרְדָּמִים הַקִּיצוּ מִתְרַדְּמֵיכֶם וְחַפְּשׁוּ בְּמַעֲשֵׂיכֶם וְחִזְרוּ בְּתְשׁוּבָה!

“Wake up, you sleepers from your sleep, you slumberers from your slumber. Search your deeds and return in teshuvah!” (Maimonides, Laws of Repentance 3:4)

The Shape of the Shofar

By Devon Spier

it is a wonder

the shofar

is shaped

like the inside

of an ear

because at the moment

we are blasted with sound

and our whole world becomes the ancient voice,

longing

calling

demanding

we are meant to listen to whom is below noise

and there, underneath the usual commands

and allegiances

is Torah

listening and weeping

in all the invisible, eternal ink

SHOFAROT

Rabbi Rachel Barenblatt

The shofar reminds us

of the ram in the thicket.

Where are we, too, ensnared?

Can our song set us free?

The sound of the shofar

shatters our complacency.

It wails with our grief

and stutters with our inadequacy.

The shofar calls us to teshuvah.

The shofar cries out

I was whole, I was broken,

I will be whole again.

Make shofars of us, God!

Breathe through us: make of us

resonating chambers

for Your love.

A Prayer for Those Denied Abortion Care

May you be safe— may a canopy of safety and peace, health and care cover you, despite everything you are now forced to endure.

May you find ways to own your body, your agency, and your dignity despite everything the government has taken from you.

May you be surrounded by a community of caring hands and loving hearts, who can hold you.

May you always know that you are holy, sacred, and your will—your autonomy—matters, should be respected as such.

May you be protected in all ways, able to weather the material, physical, emotional and spiritual hardships that come your way.

May you find within yourself resilience, strength, and bravery.

May you know that you are not alone.

Amen.