THE SHOFAR CALLS - RABBI DAN MOSKOVITZ
VANCOUVER BC - ART GALLERY JEWISH COMMUNITY RALLY
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SHOFAR

The Talmud tells us, the blasts of the shofar are meant to remind us of crying, (Babylonian Talmud, Rosh Hashanah 33A). In other texts the shofar blasts that herald the coming of the New Year are sounded as a trumpet to rally the Jewish people for battle. A battle with our own failings and to assemble us together as a community to defend against impending danger. This year it is most certainly all of those things.

SHOFAR: Tikyah

In the blast I hear the cry of the families of the fallen, the murdered, the displaced and those held hostage. I hear the cry of our people against the double

standards, the antisemitism, the moral equivalency. The warning of the violence and threats of violence that are allowed to increase in volume and intensity across Canada without effective response from our political leaders and institutional leaders. We need our leaders to enforce our laws and restore our Canadian standards of respect, decency and non-violence. In the streets, on campus, in business organizations, labor groups. The Shofar demands that we wake up. The alarm bells are ringing. It's not safe to be a Jew in Canada anymore. And if that doesn't wake up our political and institutional leaders then they need to remember what has always been true. What starts with the Jews, never ends with us. If we allow antisemitism and threats of violence against Jews to continue in Canada others will be next. We are the canary in the mine shaft and we are sounding the alarm.

In the shofar blasts I hear the cry of our people who are pained and shattered by the loss of innocent lives in Gaza. We are Jews, our tradition commands, demands that we care about every human life. The innocents in Gaza are not our enemy those that use them as humans shields, that cause terror and murder in their name, they are our enemy, they are the enemy of peace and humanity.

The soul crushing moral pain we feel as Israel fights for its very survival against a terrorist organization that hides beneath their own civilians as they continue to murder Israelis. They have no morality, no respect for life, no compunction against murdering civilians, including their own in cold blood and then crying that they are the victims. We did not want this war, its could end today if they lay down their arms, and return the hostages, the human beings they hold as ransom and an indictment of

their own barbarity. The Shofar cried out. Release them now! This war is still going, people are still being killed and wounded because of you, because you don't care about human life and we do.

SHOFAR: Shivarim, Truah

The staccato pleading of the shofar, pierces the heart again and again with each new rocket attack on the North. Unceasingly they go on and on without end, as though they will never run out of missles, the Baal Tikyah, will never run out of breath. It's inhuman, it's exhausting, and yet Am Yisrael Chai, the people Israel live. We worked and waited 2,000 years to return to our home land, countless colonialists have tried to kick us out, the Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Persians, Romans, the mamaluouks, the ottomans, the British and we are still there, the greatest story of indigenous return the

history and we aren't going anywhere, we are not leaving, ayn lanu eretz acherit/ we have no other land, we never have.

SHOFAR: Tikyah

And in the shofar I hear a rallying call, "Jews and allies come, come together" Just like we have this afternoon. Thank you to our Iranian friends, our Christian friends, our LGBTQ friends, our BIPOC friends, our political leaders that have stood by our side since the beginning and those that have come to stand with us over these 11 months.

We are called to each other, "*Kol Yisrael Arevim Zeh Bazeh* / all of Israel are responsible for each other" (Talmud, Shevuot 39a). We are our brother's keep, we are all created in the image of G-d. Just as we have shown up at rallies and online and in public

and private conversations, we must continue to show up for each other. 11 months is a long time, but 2,000 years was much longer. Hatikvah - the hope is not lost if we don't lose hope. Hope for peace, hope for Our hostages that they be returned, safely, and soon, bring them home now. Hope for an end to the suffering on both sides of the border. Hope for Canada to find its moral compass and enforce our laws against threats of violence, antisemitism and intimidation. And it has always taken more than hopes and prayers. The shofar is a call to action. It's the shift bell that says it's time to get to work. We must never stop working for peace, working for security, work for accountability, working for justice, working to free the hostages, working to ensure that Never Again will Jews live in fear or be threatened with genocide, really means Never Again.

TIKYAH GODOLAH