The Sounding of the Shofar

**סדר תקיעת שופר**

*In ancient Israel the sound of the ram’s horn announced the beginning of a new month, the Jubilee year, the coronation of a king, and all the solemn moments of the year. But when the new moon of the seventh month came to be observed as the New Year, new and deeper meaning gathered around the sounding of the Shofar. These meanings, deepening still, awaken within us each time we hear the Shofar call.*

**Am I Awake**

Am I awake? Am I prepared?

Are You listening to my prayers?

Can You hear my voice? Can You understand?

Am I awake, am I prepared?

There are sounds which first we heard as children which have engraved themselves, like ancient riverbeds long dry, into our inner ear. Years later, when we’ve grown, those early sounds will open up those ancient streams, and the place and moment of that early music will flow again across our memory, and we are at once transported there, splashing in the cooling spray like the children we still are, with all the joy and playfulness and awe we thought had dried up in our long-sought maturity.

*Buried even deeper in us than our childhood is the childhood of our people, when we were wandering and playing at the foot of Sinai, full of wonder and confusion, as the cloud appeared, and holy fire, and thundervoices out of heaven and the sounds of a Shofar.*

Each year when the Shofar sounds for us again, the cloud appears above the riverbed of memory, and we know that if sufficient wonder and confusion fill our minds, the holy fire will burn once more, and voices from our modest Shofar will thunder out of heaven once again.

*If only we can listen, the moment and the place will flow again, and we can splash with the child our people was at the beginning in the stream.*

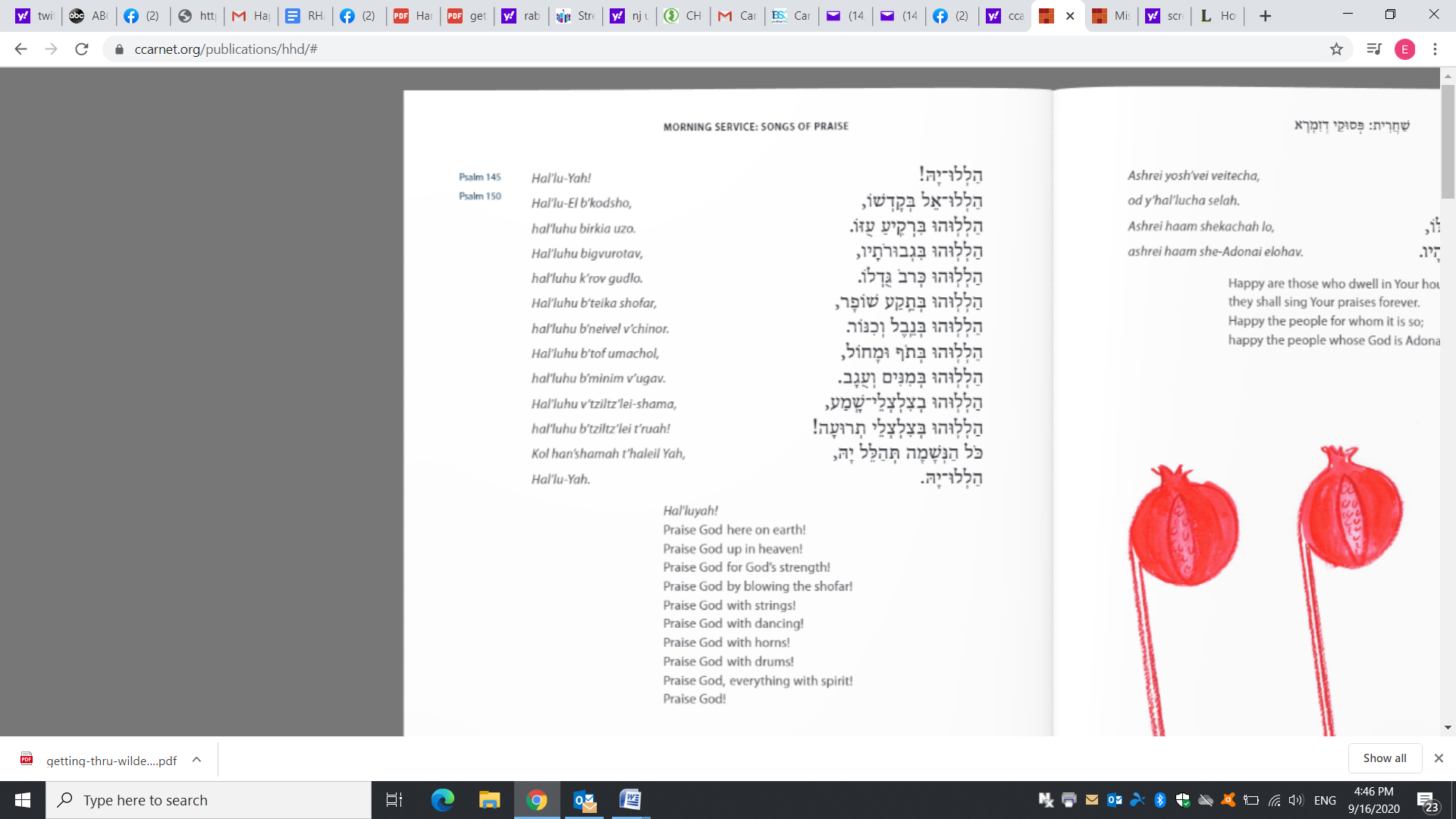
בְּאֶחָד לַחֹדֶשׁ, וּבַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי, מִקְרָא קֹדֶשׁ יִהְיֶה לָכֶם**;**

**כָּל מְלֶאכֶת עֲבוֹדָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ; יוֹם תְּרוּעָה יִהְיֶה לָכֶם.**

In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, there shall be a solemn service, a time to refrain from work, a day of commemoration proclaimed by the sound of the Shofar, a sacred assembly.

The Shofar sounds that we will hear this afternoon will declare three themes: ***Malchuyot***, awakening us to the Sovereignty of God toward which we and all present rulers must direct their paths; ***Zichronot***, memories of the covenant of survival which God sealed with all humanity through Noah, and the covenant of promise sealed with us through Abraham and Sara; and finally, ***Shofarot***, the Shofar awakens us to itself, to the Shofar calls of a future which we must dedicate ourselves to help ensure. For one day God alone will sound the Great Shofar for the freedom of humanity, when all the exiles will be gathered from the uttermost parts of the earth and led exultantly to a city which every soul shall know to be the city of God.

**Psalm 150**

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Malchuyot-- מלכויות

You and I live in a world of splendor, given to us by the Divine. Our goal and our task are to care for this world as a precious legacy; maintain it, restore it, and behold it unlike anything else we possess; for we are guardians of the world during our time, and we will pass it on to the generations to come.

Dwell on each sound of the shofar. Contemplate its meaning.

*T’kiah –*

One whole note

*Sh’varim-Tru’ah*

Three broken notes; nine staccato notes

*T’kiah –*

One whole note

My return to the right path has the power to make me whole again.

*T’kiah*

Once I was whole

*Sh’varim-Tru’ah*

In the wear and tear of living, I became broke and shattered.

*T’kiah*

My *t’shuvah* has the power to make me whole again.

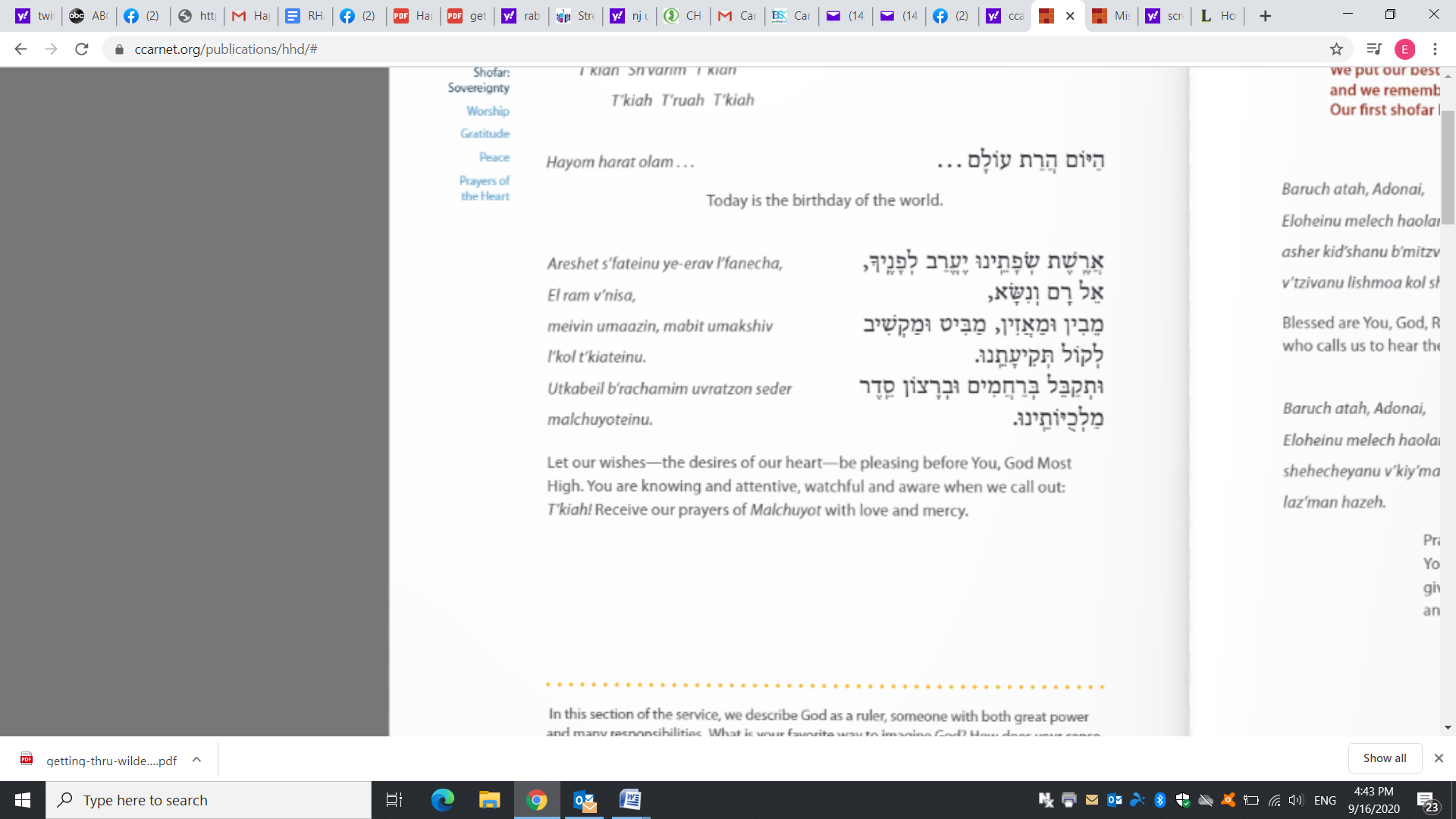
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה. יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶך הָעוֹלָם. אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוָֹיו וְצִוָּנוּ לִשְׁמוֹעַ קוֹל שׁוֹפָר

*Praised be the Eternal our God, Ruling Spirit of the universe, who has enabled us to attain holiness through the religious duty of hearing the sound of the Shofar.*

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה. יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶך הָעוֹלָם. שֶׁהֶחֱיָנוּ וְקִיְמָנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לַזְמַן הַזֶה.

*Praised by the Eternal our God, Ruling Spirit of the universe, who has granted us life, sustained us, and enabled us to celebrate this solemn season.*

תקיעה שברים תרועה תקיעה

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Zichronot -- זכרונות

This is the day that has been since Your creative work began, A remembrance of the first day. It is a statute for Israel, a law for the God of Jacob, of Rachel and of Leah. On this day nations are judged: this one for the sword, this one for peace; this one for famine; this one for closing the borders and allowing the death of the innocent caught in wars not of their making, this one for plenty; this one for caring for the exiles, not just their own.

*On this day human beings are judged; who is not taken notice of on this day? For the presence of each creature is called before You, the record of every person’s thoughts and deeds come before You. Happy is the one who is conscious of You at all times, who is aware of the courage You implanted in us as Your gift. Those who seek You will not stumble, those who trust in You will never be confounded.*

Our God and God of all those have gone before us,

Remember us for good,

For a peaceful victory over evil,

For the everlasting covenant of love You promised Abraham on Mount Moriah.

As Abraham there suppressed a father’s natural mercy to do Your will, and fulfill for us the promise engraved in Your Torah and in ours:

*I will remember for their sake*

*The covenant of the first ones who sought Me,*

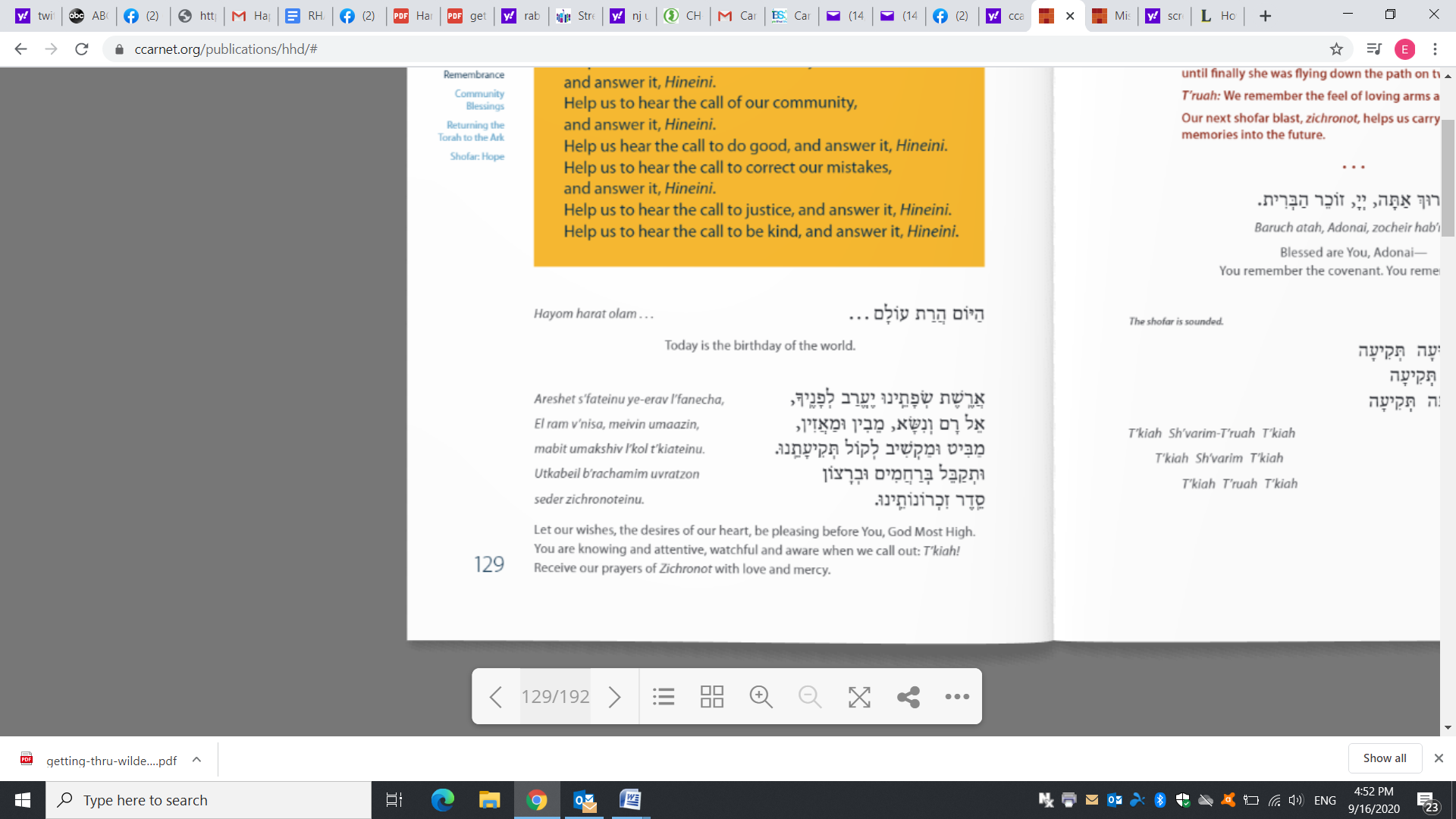
*When I brought them out of Egypt in their search for God,*

*In my search for a people.*

. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה. יְיָ, זוֹכֵר הַבְּרִית

*Praised by the Eternal, our God, who remembers the covenant and through whom the transient is invested with eternity.*

תקיעה שברים תרועה תקיעה



Shofarot -- שופרות

**Shofarot: A Prayer for Righteous Anger**

Misery for breakfast:

Morning coffee with the news of distant deaths –

Because someone’s always suffering,

And there’s bound to be a crisis raging somewhere,

Or a quieter catastrophe

Barely at the threshold of our notice.

We’re accustomed to the feeling

of something going wrong.

Like static in the background,

Tuned out so we can get on with our day.

And it’s just the same as yesterday

And nothing can be done;

So there’s not much point

In getting too upset.

But if something were to shock us

Like a baby’s piercing wail or a fire bell in the night,

Like a punch in the stomach

Or a puncture in the eardrum,

Like a savage call to conscience

Or a frantic cry for help –

Would we scream like a shofar

And get mad enough to act?

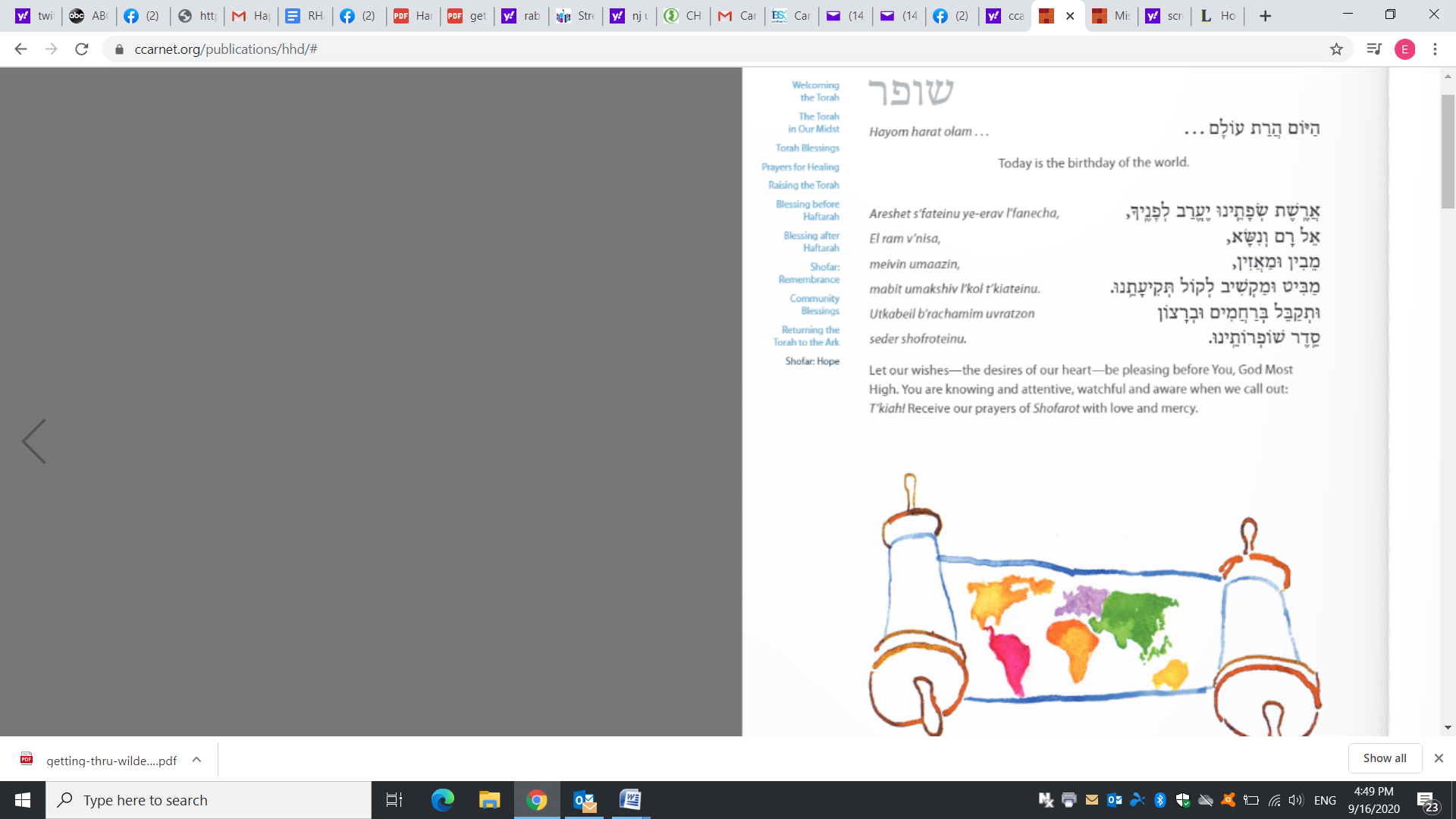
“When a ram’s horn is sounded in a city

Do the people not take alarm?”

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה. יְיָ, שׁוֹמֵעַ קוֹל תְּרוּעַת עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרַאֵל בְּרַחַמִים.

*Praised be the Eternal, our God, who in mercy hears the Shofar-sound of the people Israel.*

**תקיעה שברים תרועה תקיעה גדולה**



*We believe in tomorrow. We believe that we have the power to make tomorrow different from today. We believe that poverty need not be permanent and that people need not learn war anymore. We believe that there can be a time of peace and a time of justice, a time of fellowship and a time of tranquility for all who live on earth. We believe that we can share in bringing the day close by the way in which we live in the New Year. The world may smile at our dreams – bot no matter, we still believe. We as Jews, persist in our belief that the human being was created not for evil, but for good, not a curse, but a precious blessing.*

**Olam Chesed Yibaneh**

Olam Chesd Yibaneh  
I will build this world from love  
And you must build this world from love  
And if we build this world from love  
Then God will build this world from love

This Shofar service was based on material drawn from Gates of Repentance, The New Machzor, On Wings of Awe, Mishkan Hanefesh, and Rabbi Bennett Miller.