

Dear God,

You, and only You, know the silly game I play. Twice a day the clock strikes 11:11, and if I happen to notice the time, I say a short prayer: "Please, God, help me to be the person you have called me to be." I feel quite awake in the moment that I am uttering the prayer---connected to meaning and mission, connected to You.

Of course, there's nothing special about 11:11. As minutes go, it's no more precious or valuable than 11:18 or 4:42. You see how my brief moments of focus so quickly and reliably revert to a kind of waking slumber. There are emails to answer and errands to run, a regenerating list of to-dos stretching into a seemingly endless string of tomorrows.

And yet, each year You give me the gift of Rosh Hashanah, which truly is a special moment in time. The sounds of the shofar feel like a divine calling made manifest. They rend the air of the sanctuary and I'm brought up short. I'm ashamed---I know that I haven't done the personal work necessary to fulfill the calling with which You've entrusted me. I'm sorry that You and I don't talk more; some days my little 11:11 prayer seems to be the only communication that passes between us. Some days, I pray without conviction, as if I'm speaking into the void.

This year, I want to come to You with an open heart that trusts fully in Your open ears. I want to believe in the One Who Listens with Compassion to the Sounds of the Splintered Call of Your People Israel. I want to hide myself in that splintered call---the piercing shofar sounds and the silences in between--like Moses hid in the cleft of the rock. I want to live my life as an expression of gratitude for any aspect of Your glory that you choose to reveal.

