

PRAYER FOR PEACE BETWEEN ISRAELIS AND PALESTINIANS
During the ten days between Rosh Ha-Shanah and Yom Kippur 5786

A New Year has begun, but there doesn't seem to be anything new about it. Israel's retaliatory war against Hamas in Gaza with its devastating impact on the civilian population continues, forty-eight hostages remain in captivity, Palestinians in the West Bank are living under siege conditions and are being subjected to continual attacks by far-right settlers. It is an understatement to say that a just resolution to the conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians seems remote. And yet, having listened to the voice of the *shofar* on *Rosh Ha-Shanah*, we dare to hope that the Jubilee call for *d'ror*, freedom, will be heard, drowning out the voices of despair and bitterness, cynicism and fear on both sides. Despite our sufferings as a people over millennia, we have always been 'captives of hope' – *asirei ha-tikvah* (Zechariah 9:12). Moreover, as heirs of the prophets, committed to the prophetic call for justice, we cannot and will not cease to raise our voices against injustice and to support those Israelis and Palestinians, who are working to establish a future of peace, equality and security for both peoples. And so, we continue to pray:

El Malei Rachamim, God Full of Compassion, who heals the broken-hearted and binds up their wounds, we ask You to show all Your children the way of love and compassion, so that hatred ceases to scar their lives.

Ein Ha-Chayyim, Source of Life, we call upon You to send Your abundant blessings into every home, Israeli and Palestinian, so that new hope may overcome old fears.

Adonai Tzadik, Righteous One, who exhorts us to pursue Justice, we fervently pray that a spirit of righteousness may prevail, so that both peoples find the courage to reach a just settlement of their differences.

Oseh Shalom, Maker of Peace, who teaches us to be seekers of peace, we entreat You now to spread Your tabernacle of *shalom* – *salaam* over all the inhabitants of Your land, and to support the peacemakers among both peoples in their efforts to walk the path of reconciliation, so that a just peace may reign supreme at last – *bimheirah b'yameinu*, speedily in our own day.

And let us say: Amen.

Rabbi Elli Tikvah Sarah