



16 September 2016/13 Elul 5776

Dear Shir Tikvah:

Have you ever noticed that the High Holy Days never seem to come at the right time? They are always "too early" or "too late." Ever since I was a kid, I got a kick out of this idea; that there is a "right" or "wrong" time for Holy Days.

I think what people may mean when they say this is that we aren't prepared: for the awe, the spiritual intensity, the profound and challenging soul work of "cheshbon hanefesh"-taking an account of our souls and "t'shuvah"-seeking forgiveness and turning our lives towards our highest and holiest purpose.

To help us prepare, I offer this beautiful meditation from Marcia Falk, that appears in her book, "The Days Between: Blessings, Poems, and Directions of the Heart for the Jewish High Holiday Season."

Turning the Heart

Like the morning star whose light bursts forth...  
so Israel's redemption will come:  
bit by bit at first,  
bigger and bigger as it makes its way  
(Talmud B'rachot 1:5).

Slow spin of earth  
against sky-

imperceptible, yet  
making the days.

One stone tossed  
into the current,

and the river,  
ever-so-slight, rising.

Turning our lives, repairing our hearts and our relationships begins not with grand sweeping gestures but with the small tenderness of one stone, cast into a river, altering the river's course-and our lives.

I look forward to joining together with each of you to celebrate the New Year (High Holy Days service information [here](#)) and engaging in the deep soul work of being fully human.

Shabbat Shalom,  
Rabbi Michael Adam Latz