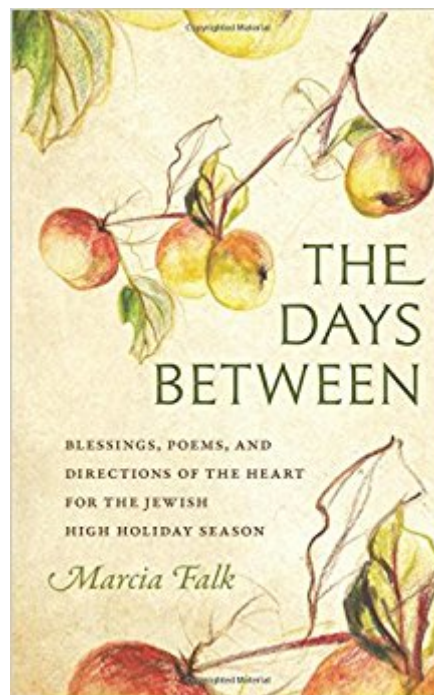


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# The Days Between: Blessings, Poems, And Directions Of The Heart For The Jewish High Holiday Season (HBI Series On Jewish Women)



## Synopsis

Winner of the Spirituality & Practice's Spiritual Book of the Year (2014) The Jewish High Holidays—the ten days beginning with the New Year Festival of Rosh Hashanah and culminating with Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement—constitute the most sacred period of the Jewish year. During this season, religious as well as nonaffiliated Jews attend synagogue services in unparalleled numbers. Yet much of what they find there can be unwelcoming in its patriarchal imagery, leaving many worshipers unsatisfied. For those seeking to connect more deeply with their Judaism, and for all readers in search of a contemplative approach to the themes of the fall season, poet and scholar Marcia Falk re-creates the holidays, key prayers and rituals from an inclusive perspective. Among the offerings in *The Days Between* are Hebrew and English blessings for festive meals, prayers for synagogue services, and poems and meditations for quiet reflection. Emphasizing introspection as well as relationship to others, Falk evokes her vision of the High Holidays as “ten days of striving to keep the heart open to change.” Accessible and welcoming to modern readers, *The Days Between* is steeped in traditional sources and grounded in liturgical and biblical scholarship. It will serve as a meaningful alternative or supplement to the traditional liturgy for individuals, families, synagogues, and communities small and large—that is, for all who seek fresh meaning in the High Holidays.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“Thorough, heartfelt, and impressive.” —Library Journal (starred

review)"Rabbis and lay leaders surely will find a treasure trove of beautiful readings to add to their services. This touching book can be used as either an alternative or a supplement to traditional liturgy, creating real meaning and adding a special vision of the High Holy Days as we open our hearts to forgiveness and yeshivah. *Jewish Journal*"Contemplative and profound, her poetry helps to set the stage for quiet reflection and introspection, opening the heart to the possibility of fresh beginnings and renewed relationships in the year ahead. *Jewish Woman*"*The Days Between: Blessings, Poems, and Directions of the Heart for the Jewish High Holiday Season* . . . will be your inseparable guide to an insightful life, one more engaged and present in mind and heart. *The Jewish Post & Opinion*"The Days Between provides a wonderful alternative or supplement to the traditional liturgy, enriching the high holy-day season. It is an invaluable addition to Judaica collections in all types of libraries. *Association of Jewish Libraries Newsletter*"A fascinating supplement to the traditional High Holidays liturgy. *American Jewish World*"Though this remarkable book is intended for use during the High Holy Days, its value as a guide for the soul extends throughout the year. *Jewish Book World*"In her lyrical re-imaginings of the traditional prayers for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, with Hebrew and English on facing pages, Falk conveys a rich spirituality and introspectiveness through simple, concrete language whose soaring metaphors are deeply grounded in earthly experience. *Jweekly.com*

“Marcia Falk is a vital voice for our times. Her brilliant work is bound to touch your heart, open your mind, and bring a new sense of the ancient power of the High Holidays. She seamlessly weaves a poet’s gift of words that open inner vistas, a liturgist’s capacity to speak to the universal, a scholar’s insight into Jewish traditions and texts, and a contemporary feminist’s fresh eyes for her task. This book is a wonderful companion for the Ten Days of *teshuvah*.” (Rabbi David Teutsch, director of the Center for Jewish Ethics at Reconstructionist Rabbinical College)

“Marcia Falk has captured the essence of our ten Holiest Days as a journey from reflection to renewal to resolve. Her exquisite poetry and prayer will speak to the contemporary seeker looking for language that opens the heart and soul. Not just American Jews but the many Israelis who are estranged from traditional Hebrew prayer will be drawn into this inviting, wonderfully usable guide and precious companion for the very days that cry for a new rite of passage.” (Rabbi Naamah Kelman, Dean of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, Jerusalem)

“The Days Between is Marcia

Falk's long-awaited sequel to her pathbreaking Book of Blessings. Since that book appeared, Falk has lost nothing of her precious poetic gifts—she remains an outstanding lyrical interpreter of Jewish liturgy. These translations and interpretations for the High Holiday season show deep empathy for the human condition, lofty aspirations for what that condition can accomplish, and intense regard for Jewish tradition—not just reiterated, but revised and reassembled for today. (Rabbi Lawrence A. Hoffman, professor of liturgy, worship and ritual, Hebrew Union College)

In *The Days Between* Marcia Falk of the Book of Blessings siddur fame provides a High Holiday machzor in her own unique style, expressing her own take on the liturgy of Rosh Hashanah, the Days of Awe, and Yom Kippur. For those looking for a traditional machzor, Falk's work is not for you. She makes a point of not only failing to anthropomorphize God, but even mentioning an entity called God at all. Rather, Falk tries to evoke a sense of sacredness in everyday items, things, ideas, and in the process, give the person using her machzor a sense of an all-encompassing divinity not confined to one time, one place, one notion, or one angle of belief. Even, in a deep sense, trying to destroy the idea that something called 'God' and the 'World' and its seemingly multifarious 'objects' are separate at all. This is a tall order, and this book sometimes succeeds in this grand mission and sometimes fails. The Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur prayer books are filled with majestic images, invocations on the fleeting nature of life and the inevitability of death, all presided over by an all-powerful King God who judges the world. Like it or not, something about those themes pulls many non-religious Jews into temple on the High Holidays (and to be fair, keeps many away!) Falk's work is a brave attempt, but it falls short of the show stopping opulence which most Jewish people expect at the High Holidays. Although I agree with the ideology behind her work, I don't think she quite reaches the mark she sets for herself, or that is expected during the High Holidays. But if the book is a failure, it is a wonderful failure. *The Days Between* certainly stands as a powerful counterpoint to Jewish traditions at this time of year, departing from well-worn tracks in liturgy and theology, while retaining a broadly defined Jewish sense.

As a devoted 'davener' I have always felt a jarring disconnect and letdown between the intensity of our most holy days and the back to my daily schedule of the time in between. Although the traditional prayers are familiar and comforting, as a woman I have to work hard to find my place in the liturgy. This beautiful supplement gives me a voice and brings me seamlessly through the

season. Thank you, Marcia Falk.

A very special book to have as an alternative entrance to the traditional liturgy. We found it especially useful in building our own simple prayer service elements when we are not with a larger community, but instead out in the high alpine mountains for the Days of Awe.

Wow -- it was worth the wait!! A beautiful book to read and ponder on Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and the days in between. Heartfelt, imaginative, soulful. Yasher Kochaych Marcia Falk, we are truly indebted to you and humbled by your gifts!!

I enjoyed the copy that I had purchased on my Kindle so much that I gifted a hard copy to a precious friend.

Interesting interpretation. I will use it for sure.

Marcia Falk has a mastery of spiritual expression and of Hebrew that truly enriches the experience of the High Holydays for me!

Very beautiful spiritual work and poetry.

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