We gather at the waters’ edge on this Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year. Like trees that drop their leaves in autumn, today we shake free of what has dried up and is no longer nourishing to us. It’s a time when we recognize that we can change our relationship to ourselves and to others. The Jewish New Year is a time of turning and beginning anew.

Letting go is part of our natural ongoing cycle. The waters which now appear to be at this place, at this time, were not here just moments before, and they will not be here afterward—the water is moving on. Throwing bits of bread into a moving body of water, they may be eaten by fish and recycled back into the food chain. The fallen leaves of the trees fertilize the soil, helping new plants and trees to sprout in the spring.

Here I am again
ready to let go of my mistakes.
Help me to release myself
from all the ways I’ve missed the mark.
Help me to stop carrying
the karmic baggage of my poor choices.
As I cast this bread upon the waters
lift my troubles off my shoulders.
Help me to know that last year is over,
washed away like crumbs in the current.
Open my heart to blessing and gratitude.
Renew my soul as the dew renews the grasses.
And we say together:
Amen.

Rabbi Rachel Barenblat
Psalm 130
From the depths I call to you.
God, hear my voice,
May Your ears listen close to the voice of my plea.
Were You, O Yah, to watch for wrongs, who could endure?
For forgiveness is Yours.
So that we hold You in awe.
I hoped for Adonai, my being hoped, and for God’s word I waited.
I await more eagerly than watchmen wait for dawn.
Wait for the Eternal, for with God is chesed—steadfast kindness—
and great and abundant redemption.
May God redeem us from all our wrongs.

Avinu Malkeinu
Avinu Malkeinu, sh'ma koleinu, Hear our Prayer.
Avinu Malkeinu, We have sinned before You.
Avinu Malkeinu, Have mercy on us and on those we love.
Avinu Malkeinu, Inscribe us for blessing in the Book of Life.
Avinu Malkeinu, Grant us a year of happiness.
Avinu Malkeinu, Be gracious and answer us, for we have not done enough
good deeds.
Please deal with us lovingly and generously and kindly and be our Help.

I’m sorry for all I did wrong
I’m sorry for all I did wrong
I’ll try to be better forever and ever
I’m sorry for all I did wrong

I’ll try I’ll try to be
The best that I can be
I’ll try I’ll try to do what is right
And be the best I can be

Avinu malkeinu, Avinu malkeinu,
Avinu malkeinu cho-neinu va’aneinu
Ki ein banu ma’asim.
Aseh imanu tzedakah va-chesed
Aseh imanu tzedakah va-chesed vehoshi-einu.