

The Beginning of the Journey

AN IMMERSION CEREMONY
FOR ROSH HASHANAH

Intention

כוונה KAVANAH

To be read before preparing for immersion:

Water is God's gift to living souls,
To clear us, to purify us,
To sustain us and renew us.¹

As I immerse myself in *mayim hayyim*, living waters,
I begin a new cycle in my life.

May my entry into the waters of the *mikveh*
mark the beginning of the journey that lies ahead.²

Immersion

טבילה T'VILAH

To be read at the mikveh's edge before you enter the water:

May I begin this year fresh and open to the possibility of transformation.

FIRST IMMERSION

Slowly descend the steps into the mikveh waters and immerse completely so that every part of your body is covered by the warm water. When you emerge, recite the following blessing:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם *Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech ha'olam*
אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּטַבִּילָה בְּמַיִם חַיִּים. *asher kidshanu bi-t'vilah b'mayim hayyim.*

Blessed are You, God, Majestic Spirit of the Universe
who makes us holy by embracing us in living waters.³

Though the future is uncertain, I release this past year with all its difficulties and joys.
I open my heart to receive the blessings of the New Year.

SECOND IMMERSION

Take a deep breath and exhale completely, while gently and completely immersing for the second time.

When you emerge, recite the following:

הַשִּׁיבֵנוּ ייִ, Hashiveinu Adonai,
אֵלֵיךָ וְנָשׁוּבָה eilecha v'nashuvah.⁴

Turn us to You, Adonai, and we shall return.

May I return to my true self and be strengthened as I continue my journey of *tikkun halev*—repairing the heart, *tikkun hanefesh*—repairing the soul and *tikkun olam*—repairing the world.

THIRD IMMERSION

Take a moment for personal reflection.

Relax, and let your body soften, as you slowly and completely immerse for the third time.

When you emerge, choose one of the following prayers:

A Full Life

O Life of the world
Grant me a full life—
A life which may be considered long
Because it has been filled with
Right living
And considered rich
Because it has been filled with
Holy acts⁵

Prayer for the New Year

May it be Your will, Majestic Spirit of the universe,
to grant us,
all your people Israel and all the world
A year of blessing,
A year of prosperity,
A year of peace and tranquility.
Show us your compassion
And guide us in your ways.⁶

ATTRIBUTIONS

This ceremony was created by Matia Rania Angelou, Deborah Issokson and Judith D. Kummer for Mayyim Hayyim Living Waters.

- 1 Penzner, Barbara Rosman and Zwiback-Levenson, Amy. *The New Jewish Wedding*, Anita Diamant. New York, NY: Fireside a trademark of Simon & Schuster, 1985, p. 156.
- 2 Ibid

- 3 Created by Mayyim Hayyim Ritual Creation Team, 2004

- 4 Lamentations 5:21

- 5 Rebbi Nachman of Breslov, *Likutei Moharan* 1:60

- 6 Adapted from Charlotte Goldberg Community Mikveh. Park Synagogue, Cleveland, OH.



Mayyim Hayyim
Living Waters
Community Mikveh
and Paula Brody & Family
Education Center