For a Groom

AN IMMERSION CEREMONY

Intention

To be read before preparing for immersion:

Immersion in water softens our form, making us malleable, dissolving some of the rigidity of who we are. This allows us to decide who we wish to be when we come out of the water. The water changes us neither by washing away something nor by letting something soak in to us, but simply by softening us so that we can choose to remold ourselves into a different image.¹

Immersion

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

Our ancestors marked new phases of their lives with the help of water. Abraham dug a well to establish a new home for future generations. Isaac, Jacob, and Moses met their beloveds by the well. Moses led the Israelites through walls of water to transformation.

Water is God’s gift to living souls,
   to cleanse us, to purify us,
   to sustain and to renew us.²

FIRST IMMERSION

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

Baruch atah, Adonai
Eloheinu, Melech ha’olam,
asher kid’shanu b’mitzvotav,
v’tzivanu al hat’vilah.

Praised are You, Adonai, God of all creation, who sanctifies us with Your commandments and commands us concerning immersion.
SECOND IMMERSION
Take a deep breath and exhale completely, while gently and completely immersing for the second time.
When you emerge, recite the following:

V’ayras’tich li l’olam; v’ayras’tich li b’tzedek
uv’mishpat, uv’chesed, uv’rachamim.
V’ayras’tich li b’emunah v’yadaat et Adonai.

I will betroth you to me forever.
I will betroth you to me with righteousness and with justice,
with lovingkindness and with compassion.
I will betroth you to me in truth; and we will come to know God.3

THIRD IMMERSION
Relax, and let your body soften, as you slowly and completely immerse for the third time.
When you emerge, recite the following blessing:

Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech ha’olam
shehecheyanu, v’kiy’manu, v’higanu la’zman hazeh.

Blessed are You, Majestic Spirit of the Universe, who gives me life,
sustains the rhythms of my body and brings me to this moment of renewal.4

A Closing Intention

My God, Creator and Sustainer of all life,
may I step forth into a life filled with continued wisdom and deeds of kindness.
May I step forward into a life filled with the blessings of new beginnings.
May I be a loving mate, partner, and friend to my beloved.
Be with me as I enter this new time in my life.
May You, God, who has blessed my coming forth into this day,
bless my going out into life, fulfillment, and peace.5

ATTRIBUTIONS
This ceremony was created by Matia Rania Angelou, Deborah Issokson and Judith D. Kummer for Mayyim Hayyim
Living Waters.
1 The National Center for Learning and Leadership, CLAL Fellows
3 Hosea 2:21–22
4 Interpretive English translation by Matia Rania Angelou, Deborah Issokson and Judith D. Kummer
5 Charlotte Goldberg Mikveh. Park Synagogue, Cleveland, OH. Adapted from ceremony at www.clevelandmikveh.org

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