

Turning to Forgiveness

AN IMMERSION CEREMONY
FOR YOM KIPPUR

Intention

כוונה KAVANAH

To be read before preparing for immersion:

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

As I immerse myself in *mayyim hayyim*, living waters,
may I open to the possibility of forgiveness.
May my entry into these waters mark my intention to forgive myself,
forgive others, and ask others to forgive me.

May my resistance to this task be dissolved.

Immersion

טבילה T'VILAH

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, יי	<i>Baruch atah, Adonai</i>
אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם	<i>Eloheinu, Melech ha'olam</i>
אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּטַבִּילָה	<i>asher kidshanu bi-t'vilah</i>
בְּמַיִם חַיִּים.	<i>b'mayyim hayyim.</i>

Blessed are You, God, Majestic Spirit of the Universe
who makes us holy by embracing us in living waters.²

SECOND IMMERSION

To be read before you immerse:

The gates are open. Hear my prayer, God.

May I have the courage and clarity to engage in the process of *teshuvah*, repentance.

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

THIRD IMMERSION

To be read before you immerse:

וְעַל כָּל־עֲוֹנוֹתַי, אֱלֹהֵי סְלִיחוֹת, V'al kulam, Elohai s'lichot,
סְלַח לָנוּ, מְחַל לָנוּ, כַּפֵּיר לָנוּ. s'lach lanu, m'chal lanu, kapeir lanu.³

For all my wrongs, O God of forgiveness, forgive me,
wipe the slate clean, grant me atonement.

Take a moment for personal reflection.

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

A Closing Intention

KAVANAH כוונה

הַשִּׁיבֵנוּ, יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְנִשׁוּבָה; Hashiveinu, Adonai, eilecha v'nashuvah;
חֲדָשׁ יָמֵינוּ בְּקִדְמוֹת. chadeish yameinu k'kedem.⁴

Turn us to You and we shall return. Renew our days as before.

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.

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. 157

² Created by Mayyim Hayyim Ritual Creation Team, 2004
³ High Holy Day liturgy
⁴ Lamentations 5:21