

# Preparing for Marriage

A HANDWASHING CEREMONY

*for those from any faith tradition*

## Before the Ceremony

*The following ceremony can be done day or night,  
indoors or outside, by anyone—Jewish or another faith tradition.*

*You can pour the water yourself, or have someone do it for you.*

*Consider using natural water from a spring, river, or the sea.*

*Take time to find a beautiful pitcher or laver,  
the two-handled cup used for washing, and have a fresh towel ready.*

With intention and awareness, I prepare my hands to receive these sacred living waters.

*Prepare your hands by removing watches, rings, bracelets, and nail polish.*

*Wash your hands with soap and water, clean beneath your nails.*

## Ritual Handwashing

Water sustains the ongoing miracle of creation.

From the invisible transport of blood and lymph

to the mighty energies of tides,

to the clouds that feed the planet.

All of it sacred: the kiss, the tear, the flow,

my own liquid body: sacred.

*Pour water over your open palms.*

I open my hands to receive the blessings of marriage.

*Pour water over your closed hands.*

I close my hands and think of what matters most:  
my beloved's hand in mine.

*Pour water over the backs of your hands.*

I cannot hold running water any more than I can stop time,  
but this moment is mine forever.

*Pour water into your cupped hands.*

I am filled to overflowing by the miracle of my life and the joy of my love.

With clean hands and a pure heart, I am ready to become one with another,  
to share the joys of life with my beloved, to teach and to learn the lessons of married life.

#### ATTRIBUTION

Diamant, Anita. *The New Jewish Wedding Now* (Scribner, 2017), p. 110



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