

Welcoming a Child

AN IMMERSION CEREMONY

Intention

כוונה KAVANAH

To be read while preparing for immersion:

I stand here today in anticipation of welcoming a child.
As I arrive at this juncture, I carry with me
the varied emotions of gratitude, excitement and fear.
I come today in amazement of the miracle of budding life,
and in full acknowledgement of the strength and wisdom through which life is formed.

Hineini, here I am, ready to fulfill the obligations of being a loving parent,
a devoted presence, and a dedicated guide throughout my child's journey.

Immersion

טבילה T'VILAH

FIRST IMMERSION—HONORING THE GENERATIONS

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

Eloheinu, v'Elohei Avoteinu v'Imoteinu, Our God, God of our Fathers and Mothers,
I proudly follow in the line of my ancestors with the hope of inheriting their best characteristics.

I aspire toward the flowing kindness of Abraham and the laughter and amazement of Sarah.
I hope to demonstrate the quiet faith of Isaac and the protective love of Rebecca.
May I have the delicate balance of Jacob and the overflowing thankfulness of Rachel and Leah.

I enter these waters as a way of honoring the generations that came before me,
and in acknowledgement of the future generations poised to come through this new life.

*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:*

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

*Blessed are You, God, Creator of all things,
Who makes us holy by embracing us in living waters.¹*

SECOND IMMERSION—A PRAYER FOR MY CHILD

To be read before you immerse:

I pray that you will be guided safely through the passage of labor and birth,
and that you will arrive with strength and vigor.

Just as you have been nourished and protected within the womb,
may you feel sheltered and cared for on every step of your journey.

May the world you inherit be a world of plenty, a world of promise, and a world of peace.

Take a moment for personal reflection.

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

THIRD IMMERSION—PRAYERS FOR PARENTHOOD

To be read before you immerse:

As I welcome my child, I pray for strength, patience, and resilience.

May the One who blessed those who came before me, guide me.

May I be a role model, an active parent, and a source of encouragement.

I pray that in difficult times I have the strength to ask for help,
and that in good times I have the wherewithal to appreciate the joys and blessings of my life.

May I know all the happiness and contentment that comes with watching a child grow and flourish.

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

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, *Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech ha'olam*
שֶׁהַחַיִּינוּ, וְקִיָּמָנוּ, וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזִמְנוֹ הַזֶּה. *shehecheyanu, v'kiy'manu, v'higianu la'zman hazeh.*

Blessed are You, Eternal God,
for giving me life, sustaining me,
and, through one miracle after another,
bringing me to this moment.²

ATTRIBUTIONS

This ceremony was created by Matia Rania Angelou and Judith D. Kummer, with contributions from Jordan Braunig and Rachel Stock Spilker, for Mayyim Hayyim Living Waters.

¹ Created by Mayyim Hayyim Ritual Creation Team, 2004

² Interpretive English translation by Matia Rania Angelou, Deborah Issokson, and Judith D. Kummer