

# Gender Transition Milestone

AN IMMERSION CEREMONY

## Intention

כוונה KAVANAH

*To be read while preparing for immersion:*

מִן הַמֵּיצַר קָרָאתִי יְהוָה, *Min hameitzar karati Yah,*  
עֲנֵנִי בְּמִרְחֵב יְהוָה. *anani vamerchav Yah.*

Out of a narrow place, I called to God. God heard me fully and answered.<sup>1</sup>

## Immersion

טבילה T'VILAH

FIRST IMMERSION—LETTING GO

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

The Hebrews are called “*lvrim*,” the crossing-over people.  
As we left *Mitzrayim*, the narrow places of Egypt, we transformed ourselves—  
a painful, yet redemptive, spiritual transition.<sup>2</sup>  
So, too, do I cross through a narrow place,  
letting go of my own bondage,  
and moving toward personal freedom.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם  
הַמְעַבֵּיר אֶת הָעוֹבְרִים. *Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech ha-olam  
hama-avir et ha-ovrim.*

Blessed are You, Eternal One, our God, Ruler of Time and Space, the Transforming One,  
for those who transition, transform, and cross over.<sup>3</sup>

*Slowly descend the steps into the mikveh waters and immerse 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  
אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּטַבִּילָה בְּמַיִם חַיִּים. *Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech ha'olam  
asher kidshanu bi-t'vilah b'mayyim hayyim.*

Blessed are You, God, Majestic Spirit of the Universe  
who makes us holy by embracing us in living waters.<sup>4</sup>

## SECOND IMMERSION—TWILIGHT

*To be read before you immerse:*

Twilight is neither day nor night, but in-between.  
We are all twilight people. We can never be fully labeled or defined.  
We are many identities and loves, many genders and none.  
May this in-between light illuminate our way to God  
Who transcends all categories and definitions.<sup>5</sup>

אֱלֹהֵי נְשָׁמָה שְׁנַתַּת בִּי טְהוֹרָה הִיא. *Elohai, n'shamah shenatata bi tehorah hi.*

God, the soul You have given me is pure.

*Take a moment for personal reflection.*

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

## THIRD IMMERSION—LOOKING AHEAD

*To be read before you immerse:*

As I stand here today, I acknowledge the powerful emotions that are part of this journey  
and that remind me of the promise that lies ahead.<sup>6</sup>

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

*When you emerge, you may recite the following blessing:*

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

Holy One of Blessing, Your Presence fills creation.

You have kept us alive, You have sustained us, You have brought us to this moment.<sup>7</sup>

## ATTRIBUTIONS

This ceremony was created by Rachel Stock Spilker and adapted by Matia Rania Angelou and Judith D. Kummer for Mayyim Hayyim Living Waters

1 Psalm 118:5

2 Excerpted and adapted from Rabbi Elliott Rose Kukla,  
<http://www.ritualwell.org/categories/398>

3 Excerpted and adapted from Rabbi Elliott Rose Kukla,  
<http://www.ritualwell.org/categories/398>

4 Created by the Mayyim Hayyim Ritual Creation Team, 2004

5 Excerpt from Reuben Zellman's, "Twilight People" in Siddur  
Sha'ar Zahav, ed. Michael Tyler and Leslie Kane, San Francisco,  
CA. Congregation Sha'ar Zahav, 2009, p.149

6 Excerpted and adapted from Rabbi Elliott Rose Kukla,  
<http://www.ritualwell.org/categories/398>

7 Congregation Beth El of the Sudbury River Valley. *Vetaher  
Libenu*. Sudbury, MA 1980, p. 104



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