

# The Beginning of the Journey

AN IMMERSION CEREMONY  
FOR ROSH HASHANAH

## Intention

כוונה KAVANAH

*To be read before preparing for immersion:*

Water is God's gift to living souls,  
To clear us, to purify us,  
To sustain us and renew us.<sup>1</sup>

As I immerse myself in *mayim hayyim*, living waters,  
I begin a new cycle in my life.  
May my entry into the waters of the *mikveh*  
mark the beginning of the journey that lays ahead.<sup>2</sup>

## Immersion

טבילה T'VILAH

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

May I begin this year fresh and open to the possibility of transformation.

## 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 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, Majestic Spirit of the Universe  
who makes us holy by embracing us in living waters.<sup>3</sup>

Though the future is uncertain, I release this past year with all its difficulties and joys.  
I open my heart to receive the blessings of the New Year.

## SECOND IMMERSION

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

*When you emerge, recite the following:*

הַשִּׁיבֵנוּ יְיָ     Hashiveinu Adonai,  
אֵלֵיךָ וְנִשְׁוּבָה     eilecha v'nashuvah.<sup>4</sup>

Turn us to You, Adonai, and we shall return.

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.

## THIRD IMMERSION

*Take a moment for personal reflection.*

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

*When you emerge, choose one of the following prayers:*

### A Full Life

O Life of the world  
Grant me a full life—  
A life which may be considered long  
Because it has been filled with  
Right living  
And considered rich  
Because it has been filled with  
Holy acts<sup>5</sup>

### Prayer for the New Year

May it be Your will, Majestic Spirit of the universe,  
to grant us,  
all your people Israel and all the world  
A year of blessing,  
A year of prosperity,  
A year of peace and tranquility.  
Show us your compassion  
And guide us in your ways.<sup>6</sup>

## 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. 156.  
2 Ibid

3 Created by Mayyim Hayyim Ritual Creation Team, 2004  
4 Lamentations 5:21  
5 Rebbi Nachman of Breslov, *Likutei Moharan* 1:60  
6 Adapted from Charlotte Goldberg Community Mikveh. Park  
Synagogue, Cleveland, OH.



Mayyim Hayyim  
Living Waters  
Community Mikveh  
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Education Center