

In Preparation for the New Year

FOR THOSE PERFORMING
THE SACRED SERVICE OF TAHARAH

Intention

כוונה KAVANAH

הִנְנִי Hineni

Here I am, ready and willing to accept the holy work of *taharah* in the new year.¹
I set my intention for this time: may I be fully present in body, heart, mind, and spirit.
May I be guided with compassion as I prepare someone for burial with cleansing water.
May I be held and cleansed in *mayyim hayyim*, in these living waters.

Four Immersions

טבילה T'VILAH

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

Water is God's gift to living souls, to cleanse us, to purify us, to sustain us and to renew us.²
As I immerse in *mayyim hayyim*, let me be present and open.
May I be renewed and refreshed, ready to continue my holy work in the coming year.

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, 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, Majestic Spirit of the Universe
who makes us holy by embracing us in living waters.³

SECOND IMMERSION

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

When you emerge, recite the following blessing:

תִּזְכֹּר נַפְשִׁי אֶת קְדֻשַׁת הַגּוּף *Tizkor nafshi et k'dushat haguf*⁴

I call to mind the holiness of the body:⁵
my own and those I lovingly prepare for burial.

THIRD IMMERSION

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

When you emerge, recite the following:

וְיֵהִי נֶעֱמַ אֲדֹנָי אֱלֹהֵינוּ עֲלֵינוּ *Vihi no'am Adonai Eloheinu aleinu*
וּמַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵינוּ כּוֹנֵנָה עֲלֵינוּ *u'ma'aseih yadeinu kon'nah aleinu*
וּמַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵינוּ כּוֹנֵנָהוּ. *u'ma'aseih yadeinu kon'nei'hu.*

May God's pleasantness rest upon us and may the work of our hands be blessed;
please, God, may our efforts prosper.⁶

FOURTH IMMERSION

Take a deep breath, exhale completely and immerse for a fourth time.

When you emerge, recite the following:

May God, Whom we call Mikveh Yisrael, God who is the source of living waters,
be with me in the coming year to guide my hands and my heart as I continue in sacred service.

Take a moment to reflect on your intentions for the new year and on the blessings of your work.

As I emerge from the *mikveh*, may all obstacles and distractions be washed away
and may I perform the holy act of *taharah* with an open and loving spirit.

ATTRIBUTIONS

This ceremony was created by Matia Rania Angelou for Mayyim Hayyim Living Waters.

- 1 Excerpted from "Preparing for Sacred Service, An Immersion Ceremony for a Mohel/Mohelet"
- 2 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
- 3 Created by Mayyim Hayyim Ritual Creation Team, 2004
- 4 Marcia Falk, *The Book of Blessings: New Jewish Prayers for Daily Life, the Sabbath, and the New Moon Festival* (Harper, 1996; Beacon, 1999), p. 13. Copyright © 1996 by Marcia Lee Falk. Excerpted
- 5 *Ibid*, p. 12
- 6 Psalm 90:17, interpretive translation



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