



# Tashlich

## Casting away our sins

Tashlich is a traditional High Holy Day ritual observed on Rosh HaShanah or between Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur. Jews discard their sins by symbolically casting them into a natural body of flowing water such as a river, lake, sea, or ocean. The practice comes from references in the prophetic books of Micah and Ezekiel.

**Directions:** Gather birdseed, leaves, pebbles, dissolvable paper, or breadcrumbs. (Some people have chosen to stop using breadcrumbs because they are not healthy for animals to eat.) If it is not possible this year for you to go to a natural body of water, try using a bowl of water or use a garden hose to make a temporary flow of water. Choose from the readings below to frame your Tashlich service. Reflecting on the past year, think about actions you regret or behaviors you want to change, and then toss your chosen item into the water.

יְשׁוּב יְרַחֵמֵנוּ יְכַבֵּשׁ עֲוֹנוֹתֵינוּ וְתִשְׁלִיךְ  
בְּמַצְלוֹת יָם כָּל־חַטָּאתָּ.

**God will take us back in love; God will cover up our iniquities,  
You will hurl our sins into the depths of the sea. (Micah 7:19)**

I am here at this season of *Teshuvah*, of turning, of returning to the self I have covered up with the ways I have learned to protect myself.

I am here in celebration and in search, in judgment and embrace, ready to confront myself and the world in which I live.

I seek to open wide the windows and walls behind which I have hidden, and to send forth my hand and heart to learn where I have come, what I have become, and what I hope to be.

I come to this body of water to perform *Tashlich*, to symbolically “cast away” my accumulated sins and transgressions, to send away my unworthy thoughts, so that I may purify my heart and soul.

On this Day of Judgment, I take account of my life and my relationships during the last year. Of some things I am proud, of others disappointed or ashamed. I resolve to strengthen and sustain the many good deeds I have performed and I resolve to cast off those actions or words that I regret. Help me to keep preserving what is good and to keep casting off what is bad. May this be a year of goodness and blessing.

הַשְׁלִיכוּ מֵעַלְיֶיכֶם אֶת־כָּל־פְּשָׁעֵיכֶם  
אֲשֶׁר פָּשַׁעְתֶּם בָּם  
וַעֲשׂוּ לָכֶם לֵב חֲדָשׁ וְרוּחַ חֲדָשָׁה.

*Cast away from yourselves all your transgressions. And create within yourselves a new heart and a new spirit. (Ezekiel 18:31)*

I cast away deception and lies, so I do not pretend to be what I am not.  
I cast away stubbornness, so I will always be open to the ideas of others.  
I cast away selfishness, so I will always enrich the lives of others.  
I cast away pride and arrogance, so I can serve God in humility and truth.  
I cast away indifference, so I will be sensitive and responsive to other people's needs.  
I pray for the strength and courage to improve my life.  
*-Adapted from Machzor Hadash*

## *A Prayer for Tashlich*

Here I am again, ready to let go of my mistakes.  
Help me to release myself, from all the ways I have missed the mark.  
Help me to stop carrying the baggage of my choices.  
As I cast this away my decisions upon the waters, lift my troubles.  
Help me to know that last year is over, washed away in the current.  
Open my heart to blessing and gratitude.  
Renew my soul as the dew renews the grasses.  
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.

*-Adapted from Rabbi Rachel Barenblat*

*Oseh Shalom bimromav  
hu ya'aseh shalom aleinu  
v'al kol Yisrael v'imru amen.*

עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמִרוֹמָיו  
הוּא יַעֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ  
וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן:

**May the One who makes peace in the high heavens  
make peace for us, all Israel and all who inhabit the earth.**

