

TASHLICH/תַּשְׁלִיחַ



Kehillat Kharakim

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Background

The Tashlikh tradition is to go to the banks of a river or other natural body of water on the afternoon of the first day of Rosh Hashanah, or on the second day if the first falls on Shabbat, and to cast pocket lint or bread crumbs into the water, to symbolize and ritualize letting go of past sins.

In modern language we think of changing or dropping parts of ourselves, parts that are destructive to us and to others, that are not in harmony with G-d and the creation.

Variations of the practice include casting an object that reflects in a more personally meaningful way that aspect of one's personality that is to be dropped. Another possibility is writing the personality aspect on a small slip of paper and casting it into the water.

The ritual has strong spiritual, psychological, and emotional impact, in part, because of the powerful symbolism of water as a life-giving and purifying force.

The effect is reinforced because a *congregation* carries out the ritual, and thus there is a communal affirmation that G-d forgives us. The ritual also confirms that those in our social world—family, friends, and acquaintances—have come to terms with our past and will allow us teshuvah (turning), to turn our lives toward G-d. The ritual also reinforces our forgiveness of ourselves, allowing us to stop thinking of ourselves as we were, to begin seeing ourselves as we want to be.

But as common sense tells us, we can't truly change or drop significant parts of ourselves merely by symbolically casting them on the water. If we are not to carry these dead parts of ourselves into the coming year, if instead we are to effectively turn toward G-d and live fully in the coming year, three things are necessary:

1. We must genuinely regret that we have injured ourselves and others, and that in doing so we have undermined the creation of a godly world.
2. We must confess the wrongdoing of our past. Confession is most effective for us when it is said aloud, and when it includes a statement of the regret and shame we feel and a resolution not to repeat our wrongs.
3. We must genuinely forsake the dead parts of ourselves. Not only must we change our behavior—stop doing the wrong we have done—but we must also stop running the words and pictures in our mind, which are rehearsals for such behavior.

Finally, to turn away from the dead parts of ourselves that we have carried through past years, and to live fully in the new year, we must not only earn forgiveness for our wrongs to G-d but to our fellow human beings as well.

While Tashlikh and teshuvah are paths to divine forgiveness, forgiveness from our fellows requires that we make our peace with them too.

Thus, if we're not to carry the burden of unfinished injuries and injustices, it's necessary to make restitution and become reconciled with the people we have wronged—and we must do this before Yom Kippur.

Moreover, regarding those who have wronged us, it is forbidden to refuse to be reconciled, to be hardhearted in the face of one who seeks our forgiveness: it is a sin against the one who seeks forgiveness, against one's self, and against G-d.

The minhag (custom) in many congregations is to walk as a group from the synagogue or other meeting place to the location of the Tashlikh service. The communal walk is an open-ended opportunity for members of the congregation to explore alternative kavanot (intentions) for our acts of teshuvah. This is often an especially opportune time to contemplate our mistakes of omission and commission as members of a congregational community.

We suggest the following as possible kavanot for Tashlikh:

1. Our closing our hearts and minds to other Jews;
2. Our dividing ourselves from other Jews and their communities;
3. Our communal failure to educate ourselves and our children with personal and enthusiastic commitment to the vision and path of Torah and Judaism;
4. Our failure to study and pray *with* our children;
5. Our rejection of Jewish tradition, even though we are mostly in ignorance of it;
6. Our failure to share our pain and hope with others in our congregation who may be experiencing the sickness of self, family, community, and country;
7. Our dealing with pressures and disappointed hopes in our lives by trying to escape from congregational community rather than strengthening it; and
8. Our failure to challenge ourselves and others to protest evil and remove the stumbling blocks we encounter every day.

Return Again*

Return Again, return again,
return to the home of your soul.
Return again, return again,
return to the Source of it all.
Return to who you are,
return to what you are,
Return to where you are,
born and reborn again.

* Words by Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach.

Teshuvah

Is it possible, to fill the hole in my soul.
Is it possible, to be, always with G-d.
Is it possible, to hear the shofar's call.
Is it possible, to make myself anew.

There will be a way,
The path revealed today,
When my heart and soul know G-d.

Is it possible, to open the door to my heart.
Is it possible, to lose that stony part.
Is it possible, to be one with Yisrael.
Is it possible to live its Torah too.

There will be a way,
The path revealed today,
When my heart and soul know G-d.

Akhat Shaalti

אַחַת שְׂאֵלְתִי מֵאֵת יְהוָה אֲבִקֵּשׁ

A-khat sha-al-ti mei-eit a-do-nai o-tah a-va-keish

שִׁבְתִּי בְּבַיִת יְהוָה כָּל יְמֵי חַיֵּי

Shiv-ti b'veit a-do-nai kol y'mei khai-yai

לְחַזוֹת בְּנוֹעַם יְהוָה וּלְבַקֵּר בְּהֵיכָלוֹ

La-kha-zot b'no-am, b'no-am a-do-nai u-l'va-keir b'hei-kha-lo

One thing I ask of Adonai, for this I yearn:
To dwell in the house of Adonai
all the days of my life,
to behold G-d's beauty,
to pray in G-d's sanctuary.

Micah 7:18-20

מי אל כְּמוֹךָ נִשְׂא עֵוֹן וְעֵבֶר עַל פֶּשַׁע לְשֹׂאֲרֵית נִחְלָתוֹ, לֹא הֶחְזִיק לְעַד אַפּוֹ
כִּי חָפֵץ חֶסֶד הוּא. יָשׁוּב יִרְחַמְנוּ יִכַּבֵּשׁ עֲוֹנֹתֵנוּ וְתִשְׁלִיךְ בְּמַצְלוֹת יָם כָּל-
חַטָּאתָם. תִּתֵּן אֱמֶת לִיעֶקֶב חֶסֶד לְאַבְרָהָם אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתָּ לְאַבְתֵּינוּ מִיַּמֵּי
קֶדֶם.

Who is a G-d like You?

You pardon iniquity and overlook transgression
for the remnant of Your heritage.

You don't hold onto Your anger forever,
because you delight in kindness.

You will again have compassion on us
and subdue our iniquities.

You will cast all our sins
into the depths of the sea.

You will show kindness to Jacob
and mercy to Abraham
as You promised our forebears of old.

Psalm 33

רָנְנוּ צְדִיקִים בְּיְיָ, לִישְׂרָיִם נְאֻה תְהִלָּה: הוֹדוּ לַיְיָ בְּכִנּוֹר, בְּנֶבֶל עֲשׂוֹר זְמִירוֹ
לוֹ: שִׁירוּ לוֹ שִׁיר חֲדָשׁ הַיִּטִּיבוּ נֶגֶן בְּתִרְוָעָה: כִּי יִשָּׂר דְּבַר יְיָ, וְכָל מַעֲשָׂהוּ
בְּאֱמוּנָה: אֲהַב צְדָקָה וּמִשְׁפָּט, חֶסֶד יְיָ מְלֵאָה הָאָרֶץ: בְּדַבַּר יְיָ שָׁמַיִם נִעֲשׂוּ,
וּבְרוּחַ יְיָ כָּל צְבָאִם: כּוֹנֵס כְּנֹד מֵי הַיָּם, נִתֵּן בְּאוֹצְרוֹת תְּהוֹמוֹת: יִירָאוּ מֵיְיָ
כָּל הָאָרֶץ, מִמֶּנּוּ יִגְוֹרוּ כָּל יֹשְׁבֵי תֵבֶל: כִּי הוּא אָמַר וַיְהִי הוּא צְוָה וַיַּעֲמֵד:
יְיָ הַפִּיר עֲצַת גּוֹיִם, הִנִּיא מַחְשְׁבוֹת עַמִּים: עֲצַת יְיָ לְעוֹלָם תַּעֲמֵד מַחְשְׁבוֹת
לְבוֹ לְדֹר וָדֹר: אֲשֶׁרֵי הַגּוֹי אֲשֶׁר יְיָ אֱלֹהָיו, הָעַם בָּחַר לְנַחֲלָה לוֹ: מִשָּׁמַיִם
הִבִּיט יְיָ, רָאָה אֶת כָּל בְּנֵי הָאָדָם: מִמְּכוֹן שִׁבְתּוֹ הַשְׁגִּיחַ, אֵל כָּל יֹשְׁבֵי
הָאָרֶץ: הַיּוֹצֵר יַחַד לִבָּם, הַמְבִּיֵן אֵל כָּל מַעֲשֵׂיהֶם: אֵינן הַמְלִיךְ נוֹשַׁע בְּרַב
חַיִל, גִּבּוֹר לֹא יִנְצַל בְּרַב כַּחַ: שָׁקַר הַסּוֹס לְתִשְׁוָעָה, וּבִרְבַּ חִילוֹ לֹא יִמְלֹט:
הִנֵּה עֵינַי יְיָ אֵל יִרְאִיו, לְמִיחָלִים לְחֶסֶדוֹ: לְהַצִּיל מִמּוֹת נַפְשָׁם, וּלְחַיּוֹתָם
בְּרָעַב: נַפְשָׁנוּ חִפְתָּה לַיְיָ, עֲזָרְנוּ וּמְגַנְנוּ הוּא: כִּי בּוֹ יִשְׁמַח לְבַנּוּ כִּי בִשְׁם
קֹדְשׁוֹ בְּטַחְנוּ: יְהִי חֶסֶדְךָ יְיָ עָלֵינוּ כַּאֲשֶׁר יַחְלֵנוּ לָךְ:

Ring out your joy to Adonai, O you just;
such praise is fitting to loyal hearts.

Give thanks to Adonai on the harp,
sing songs with a ten-stringed lute.

Sing a new song to Adonai,
play it loudly, with all your skill.

For the word of Adonai is faithful,
and all divine works to be trusted.
Adonai loves justice and right,
and fills the earth with love.

By Adonai's word the heavens were made,
the divine breath creating all the stars.
Adonai collects the waves of the ocean,
storing up the depths of the sea.

Let all the earth be in awe of Adonai,
all who live in the world revere this G-d.
Adonai spoke, and it came to be.
Adonai commanded, it sprang into being.

Adonai frustrates the designs of the nations,
defeats the plans of the peoples.
Adonai's designs shall stand forever,
the heartfelt plans of the divine
from age to age.

They are happy whose G-d is Adonai,
the people chosen as belonging to G-d.
From the heavens Adonai looks forth,
seeing all the children of humanity.

Adonai gazes from the divine dwelling place
on all the dwellers of the earth,
shaping the hearts of them all
and considering all their deeds.

A sovereign is not saved by an army,
nor a warrior preserved by strength.
A vain hope for safety is the horse;
despite its power it cannot save.

Adonai looks on those who revere G-d,
on those who hope in divine love,
to rescue their souls from death,
to keep them alive in famine.

Our soul is waiting for Adonai,
our help and our shield.
In Adonai do our hearts find joy.
We trust in the holy name.

May your love be upon us Adonai,
as we place all our hope in you.

Psalm 121

אֲשָׂא עֵינַי אֶל הַהָרִים, מֵאֵין יָבֵא עֲזָרִי. עֲזָרִי מֵעַם יְהוָה, עֲשֵׂה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ.
אֶל יִתֵּן לְמוֹט רַגְלִי, אֶל יְנוּם שֹׁמְרֵי. הִנֵּה לֹא יְנוּם וְלֹא יִישָׁן שׁוֹמֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל.
יְהוָה שֹׁמְרֵי, יְהוָה צִלְּךָ עַל יַד יְמִינֶךָ. יוֹמָם הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ לֹא יִכְבֶּה, וַיְרֵחַ בַּלַּיְלָה. יְהוָה
יִשְׁמְרֵךְ מִכָּל־רָע, יִשְׁמַר אֶת־נַפְשֶׁךָ. יְהוָה יִשְׁמַר צִאתְךָ וּבואֶךָ מֵעַתָּה וְעַד
עוֹלָם.

I lift up my eyes unto the mountains,
From where will my help come.

My help comes from Adonai,
Maker of heaven and earth.

Always faithful, you guide my steps,
Guardian of Israel, You never sleep.

Always near us, You protect us.
Shielding us from sun and moon.

You are our source of strength against the evil,
That guards the goodness in our lives.

You watch our every coming and our going,
Every moment, v'ad olam (eternally).

Source of Mercy*

Source of mercy
With loving strength
Untie our tangles.

Your chanting folk
Raise high make pure
Accept our song.

Compassionate power
Guard the precious
Who seek your union.

Cleanse and bless us
Infuse us ever
With loving care.

Gracious source
Of holy power
Do guide your folk.

Awesome One
Do turn to those
Who mirror the holy.

Receive our chant
O hear our cries
You know our secrets

בְּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מַלְכוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

Ba-rukhh shem k'vod mal'khu-to l'o-lam va-ed.

*Words by Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi.

Avinu Malkenu*

אָבִינוּ מַלְכֵנוּ

A-vi-nu mal-kei-nu

חֲנֻנֵנוּ וְעֲנָנוּ

kha-nei-nu va'a-nei-nu

כִּי אֵין בָּנוּ מַעֲשִׂים

ki ein ba-nu ma'a-sim

עֲשֵׂה עִמָּנוּ

a-sei i-ma-nu

צְדָקָה וְחֶסֶד

tza-da-ka v'khe-sed

וְהוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ.

v'ho-shi-a-nu

The days of Judgment are here
We tremble with fright and with fear
At the sound of the ram's horn
The worlds are new-born
Glad tidings of new hope we hear.

Please Ruler our Parent sweet
Approach us and we'll meet.
Please lift our face to You in grace
Be kind from Your mercy seat.

אָבִינוּ מַלְכֵנוּ . . .

A-vi-nu mal-kei-nu . . .

Remember us to life
Make cease all war and strife
May good increase in a world of Peace
May death surrender to Life.

O G-d all this New Year
To Your will we shall adhere
We pledge in deed Your Law to heed,
Your Torah we shall hold dear.

אָבִינוּ מִלְכֵנוּ . . .

A-vi-nu mal-kei-nu . . .

Isaiah 11:9

לֹא יִרְעוּ וְלֹא יִשְׁחִיתוּ בְּכֹל הַר קְדוֹשִׁי, כִּי מִלְאָה הָאָרֶץ דַּעַה אֶת יְהוָה, כַּמַּיִם
לַיָּם מְכַסִּים.

None shall hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain, for the love of Adonai shall fill the
earth as the waters fill the sea.

RECITE SEVEN TIMES:

לְעוֹלָם יְהוָה דְּבַרְךָ נִצָּב בַּשָּׁמַיִם.

L'o-lam a-do-nai d'var-kha
ni-tzav ba-sha-mayim.

Adonai, Your word stands firm
in the heavens forever.

* English lyrics from *Hashir V'hashevah* (Phila.: B'nai Or, n.d.).

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