



***Tashlich*: Casting our Sins Away**

Tashlich is a remarkable ceremony - symbolic and concrete all at the same time. Through this ritual, we express not only our desire to be free from sin but our continuing hope that we will be forgiven for past misdeeds. On the afternoon of the first day of *Rosh Hashanah* -- or on the second day, if the first day is a Shabbat -- it is customary to go to a flowing body of water and to recite prayers while "casting" our sins (represented by bread crumbs) into the water. As we read in Micah: "You will cast (*Tashlich*) all your sins into the depths of the sea" (7:19). By performing *Tashlich*, we signify our hope that God will overlook our failings during the past year and grant us favor in the year to come.

The preferred "order" for the bodies of water is (1) the sea, (2) a river, (3) a lake, spring, or fountain. If there is no such water within walking distance; in the case of inclement weather; or if one did not perform the ceremony on *Rosh Hashanah* for any reason, then *Tashlich* may be performed at any time up to *Yom Kippur*.

According to some customs, the body of water we visit should have fish in it. It has been suggested that this helps to remind us of our precarious existence and thus puts us in the mood to repent. It has also been suggested that we be may compared to fish caught in the net of divine judgment.

While it is traditional to shake out the hems of one's clothing to ensure that all "sins" have been disposed of, *Tashlich* ceremonies differ all over the world. The Jews of Kurdistan had a custom to recite the *Tashlich* prayer near a river and then to jump into the water and swim around, instead of only shaking out the hems of their clothing

Today we come to this body of water to perform the Tashlich ceremony, seeking symbolically to “cast away” our accumulated sins and transgressions so that we may purify our hearts and our souls, as the new year begins.

Let us cast away the sin of deception, so that we will mislead no one in word or deed, nor pretend to be what we are not.

Let us cast away the sin of vain ambition, which prompts us to strive for goals which bring neither true fulfillment nor genuine contentment.

Let us cast away the sin of stubbornness, so that we will neither persist in foolish habits nor fail to acknowledge our will to change.

Let us cast away the sin of envy, so that we will neither be consumed by desire for what we lack nor grow unmindful of the blessings which are already ours.

Let us cast away the sin of selfishness, which keeps us from enriching our lives through wider concerns and great sharing and from reaching out in love to other human beings.

Let us cast away the sin of indifference, so that we may be sensitive to the sufferings of others and responsive to the needs of people everywhere.

Let us cast away the sin of pride and arrogance, so that we can worship God and serve God's purpose in humility and truth.

Avinu Malkeinu

Avinu Malkeinu, she-ma ko-lei-nu

Eternal, our God, hear our prayer.

Avinu Malkeinu, we have sinned before you.

Eternal, our God, have mercy upon us and upon our children.

Avinu Malkeinu, inscribe us for blessing in the book of life.

Eternal, our God, grant unto us a year of happiness.

Avinu Malkeinu, Be gracious and answer us, for we have not done enough good deeds. Please love us, be generous with us, and help us.

אָבִינוּ מֶלְכֵנוּ חֲנֻנוּ וְעֲנֵנוּ כִּי אֵין בָּנוּ מַעֲשִׂים
עֲשֵׂה עִמָּנוּ צְדָקָה וְחֶסֶד וְהוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ:

Avinu Malkeinu Chanenu va'aneinu (2x) ke ein banu ma'asim.

Aseh imanu tzdakah vachessed -

Aseh imanu tzdakah vachessed, v'hoshi'enu. (repeat)

Psalm 130

Out of the depths I call to You;

Lord, hear my cry, heed my plea.

Be attentive to my prayers, to my sigh of supplication.

Who could endure, Lord, if You kept count of every sin?

But forgiveness is Yours: therefore we revere You.

I wait for the Lord; my soul yearns.

Hopefully I await His word.

I wait for the Lord more eagerly than watchmen wait for dawn.

Put your hope in the Lord, for the Lord is generous with mercy.

Abundant is God's power to redeem;

May God redeem the people Israel from all sin.

Micah 7:18-20

מִי־אֵל כְּמוֹךָ נִשְׂא עֹן וְעֵבֶר עַל פְּשָׁע לְשֹׂאֲרֵית גִּחְלָתוֹ,
לֹא הֶחְזִיק לְעַד אַפּוֹ כִּי חִפֵּץ חֶסֶד הוּא. יָשׁוּב יִרְחַמֵּנוּ
יִקְבֹּשׁ עֲוֹנֹתֵינוּ וְתִשְׁלִיךְ בַּמַּצְלוֹת יָם כָּל־חַטָּאתָם. תִּתֵּן
אֲמַת לְיַעֲקֹב חֶסֶד לְאַבְרָהָם אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתָּ לְאַבְתֵּינוּ מִימֵי קֶדֶם.

Who is a God like You, forgiving iniquity and pardoning the transgression of the remnant of Your people? You do not maintain anger forever but You delight in loving-kindness. You will again have compassion upon us, subduing our sins, casting all our sins into the depths of the sea. You will show faithfulness to Jacob and enduring love to Abraham, as You promised our fathers from days of old.