



**Tashlikh** is a Jewish New Year's tradition that traces its origins to the biblical Book of Micah, which says that God will "cast all our sins into the depths of the sea" (7:18-20). In this ritual, we throw pieces of bread into a river, symbolizing letting go of those aspects of our past that prevent us from flourishing. The Hebrew word *tashlikh* is related to *shalekhet*, which describes the way a tree sheds its leaves. Standing here together, at the start of Fall, we are invited to be like those trees - to shed off the weight of what we once were, committing ourselves to a fresh beginning, the possibility of a changed life.

#### **STEP 1 - SING:**

Ana b'koah (b'koah)  
 Gedulat yemin'kha (yeminkha)  
 Tateer tzerura  
 Kabel rinat am'kha  
 Sagveinu tahareinu nora  
 Ana b'koah gedulat yemin'kha  
 Tateer tzerura (Tateer tzerura)  
 Kabel rinat, rinat am'kha  
 Sagveinu tahareinu nora

*(This song, "Ana B'koach," is one of the masterpieces of Jewish mystical prayer. It means "Source of Mercy, with loving strength, please undo the knots that tie us up. Accept the prayers of Your people; Awesome One, raise us up, cleanse us.")*

#### **STEP 2 - MEDITATE:**

*Before we symbolically throw away those parts of ourselves that we are ready to leave behind, we will take a few moments to reflection on the year that has past, its gifts and its challenges, and to fix in our minds intentions, hopes, and prayers for this coming year.*

### **STEP 3 - AWAKEN:**

*One of the most important Jewish rituals during this High Holy Day season is hearing the shofar, a special instrument fashioned from an animal's horn. The shofar invites us to wake up: to stop sleepwalking through our lives, to ask ourselves whether we are living the lives we want, whether we are doing enough to care for ourselves or to help others, how we might improve ourselves in the coming year? Let us hear the shofar and let its sound penetrate our hearts.*

### **STEP 4 - PRAY:**

**Today** we come to this river 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 part of ourselves that is deceptive, so that we will mislead no one in word or deed, nor pretend to be what we are not.

**Let us cast away** the part of ourselves that is vain, which prompts us to strive for goals that bring neither true fulfillment nor genuine contentment.

**Let us cast away** the part of ourselves that is stubborn, so that we will neither persist in foolish habits nor fail to acknowledge our will to change.

**Let us cast away** the part of ourselves that is jealous, so that we will neither be consumed by desire for what we lack nor grow unmindful of the blessings that are already ours.

**Let us cast away** the part of ourselves that is selfish, 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 part of ourselves that is apathetic, so that we may be sensitive to the sufferings of others, responsive to the needs of people everywhere, and responsible for all of God's creation.

**Let us cast away** the part of us that is arrogant, so that we can learn, grow, and make whatever changes we need to make to be the best that we can be. **Amen.**

### **STEP 5 - THROW:**

*Walk to the water's edge. Consider what parts of your life you want to cast away. Then, take pieces of bread and throw them into the river. As each piece falls, feel yourself become lighter, freer, and open to the possibilities a new year offers.*

### **STEP 6 - CELEBRATE:**

*Wish your family, friends, and those around you "Shanah Tovah U'Metukah!" ("May you have a good and sweet New Year!")*