

Temple Beth Emeth

Ann Arbor, Michigan

Tashlich Service

To open the service, please sing together:

Hashiveynu Adonai eylecha v'na-shuva,
Chadeysh yameynu k'kedem.

Turn us to You, Adonai, and we shall return;
Renew us as in days of old

Micah 7:19 You will again have compassion upon us, subduing our sins, casting all our sins into the depths of the sea.

During this season of repentance, we are called upon to do *t'shuvah*, to return to God in sincerity and in truth. Through prayer and study, reflection and ritual, we strive to begin the new year in a spirit of humility, self-scrutiny, and spiritual renewal.

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

A Prayer for Tashlikh

By Rabbi Rachel Barenblat

Here I am again
ready to let go of my mistakes.

Help me to release myself
from all the ways I've missed the mark.

Help me to stop carrying
the karmic baggage of my poor choices.

As I cast this bread upon the waters
lift my troubles off my shoulders.

Help me to know that last year is over,
washed away like crumbs in the current.

Open my heart to blessing and gratitude.
Renew my soul as the dew renews the grasses.

And we say together: Amen.

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.

Reflection:

We ask for a piece of sand, and God gives us a beach.

We ask for a drop of water and God gives us an ocean.

We ask for time and God gives us the bond of everlasting life.

And it is so easy for us to fall in love with the gift

And forget the Giver. *After Edward Farrell*

A Social Justice Tashlich Prayer

By Rachel Silverman

Originally written for Keshet's 2018 campaign for trans rights.

Read Responsively

Let us cast away the sin of indifference to injustice

Let us cast away the sins of times we did not reach out to help others

Let us cast away sins of not being better allies because of our own privileges

Let us cast away the sins of times we did not help our transgender siblings and community members

Let us cast away the sins of the times we did not have the courage to speak up about injustice

Let us cast away the sins of times that we did not help others because we were happy with our own lives

Let us cast away the times we witnessed prejudice or discrimination but did nothing

Let us cast away the sin of ignoring those in need

Let us cast away the sins of not having time to be part of activism in our communities

Let us cast away the sins of not giving tzedakah to causes

Let us cast away the sin of complacency in oppression

Tashlich

In quiet and at your own pace, take a few bread crumbs (or alternatives) in your hand and walk to the water's edge. There, shake your hand empty three times into the water. Each time, remember and name, aloud or to yourself, an aspect of your behavior you wish to "cast away". When you are finished, return to the group or to your place for the closing songs.

Avinu Malkeinu

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

Aseh imanu tzdakah vachesed

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

Avinu, Malkeinu, graciously answer us, although we are without merits;

Deal with us charitably and lovingly save us.

Hashkiveinu

Hashkiveinu Adonai, eloheinu l'shalom, v'ha-amideinu malkeinu l'hayim. (Repeat)

Grant, O God, that we lie down in peace, and raise us up, our Guardian, to life renewed.

Spread over us the shelter of Your peace.

Tekiya G'Dolah

References:

<https://www.ritualwell.org/categories/496>

<http://www.betheldurham.org/docs/tashlich.pdf>

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Additional Readings

(Optional)

Coming Up on September by Marge Piercy

White butterflies, with single
black fingerpaint eyes on their wings
dart and settle, eddy and mate
over the green tangle of vines
in Labor Day morning steam.

The year grinds into ripeness
and rot, grapes darkening,
pears yellowing, the first
Virginia creeper twining crimson,
the grasses, dry straw to burn.

The New Year rises, beckoning
across the umbrellas on the sand.
I begin to reconsider my life.
What is the yield of my impatience?
What is the fruit of my resolve?

I turn from the frantic white dance
over the jungle of productivity
and slowly a niggun slides,
cold water down my throat.
I rest on a leaf spotted red.

Now is the time to let the mind
search backwards like the raven loosed
to see what can feed us.
Now, the time to cast the mind forward
to chart an aerial map of the months.

The New Year is a great door
that stands across the evening and Yom
Kippur is the second door. Between them
are song and silence, stone and clay pot
to be filled from within myself.

I will find there both ripeness and rot,
What I have left done and undone,
What I must let go with the waning days
and what I must take in.
What I have done and undone,
With the last tomatoes, we harvest the fruit of our
lives.

Tashlich by Rena Gray Fein

I wish I hadn't done that
I wish I hadn't said that
I wish I hadn't thought that, I wish I hadn't ...
But I did.

And I'm still me, but it feels so wrong.
It's stuck in my head like the tune of a song
That really bad feeling seems to be here to stay.
So I keep on wishing, but it won't go away.

This year, by the water, I'll whisper, "I'm sorry"
And I'll clench my fist hard 'round the crumbs in my
pocket

Then I'll finally reach up and
Let them all go
And I'll catch my reflection -

Arms raised up high
With the clouds right above
Like a bird in the sky
Looking free
Feeling free
Free to feel
And also Free to move on
Forgiven by One

The Thirteen Attributes of God

- The Lord! (*Adonai*)—God is merciful before a person sins!
- The Lord! (*Adonai*)—God is merciful after the sinner has gone astray.
- God (*El*)—a name that denotes power as ruler over nature and humankind,
- Compassionate (*raham*)—eases the punishment of the guilty.
- Gracious (*v'hanun*)—God shows mercy even to those who do not deserve it
- Slow to anger (*ereh apayim*)—God gives the sinner ample time to reflect, improve, and repent.
- Abundant in Kindness (*v'rav hesed*)—God is kind toward those who lack personal merits,
- Truth (*v'emet*)—God never reneges on His word to reward those who serve Him.
- Preserver of kindness for thousands of generations (*notzeir hesed la-alafim*)—
- Forgiver of iniquity (*nosei avon*)—God forgives intentional sin resulting from an evil disposition, as long as the sinner repents.
- Forgiver of willful sin (*pesha*)—God allows even those who commit a sin with the malicious intent of rebelling against and angering Him the opportunity to repent.
- Forgiver of error (*v'hata'ah*)—God forgives a sin committed out of carelessness, thoughtlessness, or apathy.
- Who cleanses (*v'nakeh*)—God is merciful, gracious, and forgiving, wiping away the sins of those who truly repent; however, if one does not repent, God does not cleanse.

Midrash

Tashlich also recalls the merit of our ancestors. According to the Midrash, when Abraham went to bind Isaac as a sacrifice over the altar (on the day of Rosh Hashanah), Satan appeared before them in the form of a large river. They entered and the water rose to their necks. Abraham then said: "God, the waters have reached life itself. If either I or my son Isaac drown, through whom will the Unity of Your Name be rendered?" God thereupon "scolded" the river and they were saved. We therefore go near seas or rivers to recall their merit in having offered their lives for the fulfillment of God's commandments.

"Deliver me, O God, for the waters have reached my neck..." Psalm 69:2

I have further observed under the sun that
The race is not won by the swift, Nor the battle
by the valiant, Nor is bread won by the wise,
Nor wealth by the intelligent, Nor favor by the
learned.

For the time of mischance comes to all. And one cannot even know when. As fishes are enmeshed in a fatal net, and as birds are trapped in a snare, so we are caught at the time of calamity, when it comes upon us without warning.

Ecclesiastes 9:12