

JEWISH CENTER OF THE MORICHES

TASHLICH

A TIME TO LET GO
AND BEGIN AGAIN

Reflection • Return • Repair • Renewal

WHAT IS TASHLICH?

Tashlich means “casting away.” On Rosh Hashanah, many Jews gather beside flowing water to reflect on the year that has passed and on the possibility of teshuvah - return.

The custom is associated with the words of the prophet Micah: “You will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.” (Micah 7:19)

The act is symbolic. Tashlich does not erase what happened, excuse harm, or replace the work of apology and repair. It gives us a physical moment in which to stop, look truthfully at ourselves, and choose what we want to do differently.

AT THE WATER

At the water, we pause between what has been and what may yet be. We cannot change the year that has passed, but we can look at it truthfully. We can acknowledge where we missed the mark, seek forgiveness where repair is possible, and release what should not be carried into the year ahead. Tashlich does not erase the past. It reminds us that teshuvah - return - is always possible.

A SYMBOLIC ACT

Some people traditionally cast small crumbs of bread into the water. Because feeding wildlife can be harmful, you may instead use a small leaf, hold and then set down a pebble, or simply open your hand over the water. The meaning lies in the reflection, not in the object.

RECOGNIZE	RETURN	REPAIR	RENEW
See clearly.	Turn toward what matters.	Make amends where possible.	Begin again with intention.

REFLECTION BEFORE CASTING

Stand quietly for a moment. Notice the water. Notice your breathing. Then ask yourself:

What do I need to let go of?

What resentment, habit, fear, or old story am I carrying that I no longer want to carry?

Where did I miss the mark?

Whom did I hurt? Where was I less patient, less generous, less courageous, or less truthful than I hoped to be?

What requires repair?

Is there an apology to make, a conversation to begin, a promise to keep, or an action I can take?

What do I want to carry forward?

What goodness from this past year deserves to be strengthened rather than cast away?

WHEN YOU ARE READY

Hold your symbolic object - or simply close your hand. Name silently one thing you wish to release. Open your hand. Watch the water move onward. Then name one thing you intend to do differently in the new year.

השיבנו ה' אליך ונשובה חדש ימינו כקדם

Hashiveinu Adonai eilecha v'nashuvah;
chadesh yameinu k'kedem.

Help us return to You, and we will return.
Make our days new again. - Lamentations 5:21

A PRAYER FOR TASHLICH

Source of life and renewal,

I stand at the water carrying a year of choices -
some wise, some mistaken,
some kind, and some I wish I could make again.

Help me see clearly without turning away.
Give me courage to repair what can be repaired,
to ask forgiveness where I have caused hurt,
and to forgive where forgiveness is possible.

Help me release what need not follow me:
resentment that has hardened,
habits that diminish me,
and excuses that keep me from change.

But let me not cast away the lessons of the year.
Let memory become wisdom,
regret become responsibility,
and intention become action.

As this water moves onward,
may I move forward with greater compassion,
greater wisdom, and a heart open to return.

May this new year be a year of teshuvah, repair, and renewal.
Shanah tovah.

A FINAL MOMENT

Before leaving the water, think of one person for whom you are grateful, one act of repair you will undertake, and one hope you will carry into the new year.