



Tashlich: Letting Go into the Water



Tashlich is a ritual to release what we no longer wish to carry. You can do Tashlich at a body of water — or even at home with a bowl of water and dissolvable paper.

Tashlich means “you will cast away.” The idea comes from the prophet Micah, who imagined God casting our mistakes into the depths of the sea. On Rosh Hashanah or during the ten days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, many Jewish individuals and families gather near flowing water to symbolically release the things we want to leave behind.

We bring the heaviness from the past year — the harsh words we wish we hadn’t said, the promises we broke, the times we turned away when we could have helped — and let it go. Not because we are bad, but because we are always learning. Because letting go is part of growing.

You can do Tashlich in many different ways:

- At the ocean, a stream, river, or lake
- At home, with a bowl of water and a quiet heart
- With flowers or pebbles
- With pieces of rice paper that melt gently into the water
- Even in a bathtub, because what matters most is the intention

Invite everyone to take a moment of quiet reflection.

Ask yourself: What do I want to let go of from this past year? What hurt can I release? What mistake can I let go of?

Give each person a moment to whisper or think their answer. Then offer rice paper, small stones, flower petals, or other safe materials to gently place into the water. (To protect the environment and avoid harming fish and birds, many people no longer throw bread or breadcrumbs into the water, as was the tradition.)

As we let go, we open up. We open to kindness. We open to courage. We open to being better than before.

Repeat after me:

May the waters carry away what we no longer need.

[repeat]

May we return lighter, clearer, and more ready to begin again.

[repeat]

Amen.

A note:

Reverse Tashlich is an environmental action in which, instead of casting items into the water, we remove plastic, trash, and other waste from the ocean and other bodies of water. One environmental organization that encourages and organizes Reverse Tashlich is [Repair the Sea](#) (Tikkun Hayam).

CREDITS

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