

## TASHLICH

*On the First Day of New Year (or, when New Year falls on Sabbath, on the Second Day), after the Afternoon Service, it is customary to go to the banks of a river, or of any stretch of water, and to say the following:*

*Micha 7.* Who is a God like You, who forgives iniquity and overlooks the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He does not retain His anger for ever, because He delights in lovingkindness. He will again have compassion on us, and suppress our iniquities. You will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea. May You cast all the sins of Your people, the House of Israel, into a place where they shall no more be recalled or remembered, or ever again come to mind. You will be true to Jacob, show lovingkindness to Abraham, as You promised on oath to our fathers in days gone by.

*Psalm 130.* A song of Ascent. Out of the depths I call to You, O Lord. Lord, hear my voice; let Your ears be attentive to my plea for mercy. If You, O Lord, should keep account of sins, who could stand? But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are revered. I wait for the Lord; my soul waits; hopefully I wait for His word. My soul waits for the Lord more eagerly than watchmen for the morning; yes, more than watchmen for the morning. O Israel, put your hope in the Lord; for with the Lord there is lovingkindness, and with Him there is great power to redeem. He Himself will redeem Israel from all their sins.

## סדר תשליך

*On the first day of ראש השנה (or, when ראש השנה falls on שבת, on the second day), after the Afternoon Service, it is customary to go to the banks of a river, or of any stretch of water, and to say the following:*

מִי אֵל כַּמוֹךָ נִשְׂא עוֹן וְעֵבֶר עַל פְּשַׁע לְשֹׂאֲרֵית נַחֲלָתוֹ,  
לֹא הֶחְזִיק לְעַד אָפוּ, כִּי חָפֵץ חַסֵּד הוּא: יָשׁוּב יִרְחַמְנוּ  
יִכַּבֵּשׁ עֲוֹנוֹתֵינוּ, וְתִשְׁלִיךְ בְּמַצְלוֹת יָם כָּל חַטֹּאתֶם: תִּתֵּן  
אֶמֶת לְיַעֲקֹב, חַסֵּד לְאַבְרָהָם, אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתָּ לְאַבְתְּרָנוּ מִיְמֵי  
קֶדֶם:

תהלים קל שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת. מִמַּעַמְמִקִּים קָרָאתִיךָ יי: אֲדָנִי שְׁמַעְהָ  
בְּקוֹלִי. תִּהְיֶינָה אַזְנוֹתַי קְשׁוּבוֹת לְקוֹל תַּחֲנוּנָי: אִם-עֲוֹנוֹת  
תִּשְׁמֹר-יְהוָה. אֲדָנִי מִי יַעֲמֵד: כִּי-עֲמֹךָ הַסְּלִיחָה לְמַעַן תִּוְרָא:  
קְוִיתִי יי קוֹתָהּ נַפְשִׁי. וְלִדְבָרוֹ הוֹחֲלֵתִי: נַפְשִׁי לְאֲדָנִי מִשְׁמֹרִים  
לְבַקֵּר שְׁמֹרִים לְבַקֵּר: יַחַל יִשְׂרָאֵל אֱלֹהֵי. כִּי-עַם-יי הַחַסֵּד  
וְהַרְבֵּה עֲמוֹ פְּדוֹת: וְהוּא יִפְדֶּה אֶת-יִשְׂרָאֵל מִכָּל עֲוֹנוֹתָיו:

## TASHLICH

On the first day of Rosh Hashanah, a little before sunset, observant Jews congregate at the edge of a body of running water and recite the last verses of the Book of Micah, concluding with the sentence: 'And You will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.' The seashore, a river or flowing brook, or even a well of spring water, may serve the purpose, but not a pool or any stagnant water. The later rabbis required that the water should have fish, which serve the purpose of reminding us that we are like the fish caught in the net, weak, helpless, and subject to the many ills that beset us in life. After the lines from Micah and some additional prayers composed in more recent years have been recited, it is customary to shake the skirts of one's garments over the water, as if physically transferring the sins, which are figuratively supposed to cleave to one's garments, to the river or ocean so that they may be carried away and not be remembered. If the first day of Rosh Hashanah falls on a Sabbath, the ceremony is performed on the second day. . . .

Purely symbolic in its origin, the ceremony has been given mystical meanings, and several superstitions have become associated with it. The custom of casting small pieces of bread upon the waters as food for the fish is already mentioned by Rabbi Jacob Molin (14th century, Germany), who strove to discourage it. In the added prayers arranged for the occasion, reference is made to evil spirits (*kelippot*) created by the sins of the individual which cling to one's garments and which should be shaken from them into the water. It was mainly due to these mystical elements of the ceremony that many have been opposed to its practice altogether and others tried to find in it traces of heathen superstitions. . . There is no doubt that the ceremony of *Tashlich*, observed mainly by the

Ashkenazic Jews, has no such superstitious notions connected with it. It is rather a symbolic act emphasizing concretely the yearning to be cleared of sin and the hope that one may be forgiven.

*Julius H. Greenstone*

Another passage associated with the thought of *Tashlich*: 'Also I shook my lap, and said, So God shake out every man from His House . . . that does not keep his promise, may he be shaken out and emptied like this.'

*Nehemiah 5:13*

The custom of going to a body of water on Rosh Hashanah is a symbolic allusion, for the waters which now seem to be at this place were not here before and will not remain afterwards. So, if the sinner says to himself, I will not repeat my sin, the sin like the waters will move on.

*Hayyim ben Bezalel of Friedberg*