

Tashlich. (You will cast away). In this context, tashlich refers to a custom dating from at least as early as the fourteenth century, based on the last verses of the Book of Micah:

יָשׁוּב יְרַחֲמֵנוּ, יִכְבֹּשׂ עֲוֹנוֹתֵינוּ; וְתַשְׁלִיךְ בְּמַצְלוֹת יָם, כָּל חַטָּאוֹתָם.

Ya-shuv y'rachameinu, yich'bush avonoteinu; v'tashlich bimtzulot yam, kol-hatotam.

"God will take us back in love. God will cover up our iniquities, and You will cast into the depths of the sea all their sins" (Micah 7:19).

We state our intention to return to our true selves. For many Jews, Rosh Hashanah is a time for reciting many words. Through *tashlich*, we use our bodies and actions to do the work of return. Jewish communities have for many generations gathered by rivers, streams, or oceans on the first day of Rosh HaShanah, recited tashlich prayers, and thrown bread crumbs into the water to symbolize our desire to rid ourselves of our sins.

Kol HaN'shama

*Kol han'shamah t'haleil Yah:
Hal'lu, hal'lu Yah.*

כָּל הַנְּשָׁמָה, תְּהַלֵּל יְהוָה: הַלְלוּ-יְהוָה.

"Let all that breathes, praise God! Hallelujah!" (Psalms 150:6)

Hard Questions

**Let us ask ourselves hard questions
For this is the time of truth.**

***How much time did we waste
in the year that is now gone?***

**Did we fill our days with life
Or were they dull and empty?**

***Was there love inside our home
or was the affectionate word left unsaid?***

**Was there real companionship with our children and our mates
or was there living together, yet growing apart?**

***Did we listen with compassion, not only to the stranger,
but to our family and our friends?***

Did we really see each human being as a gift from God?

Did we really hear people as they reached out to us?

The kind deed: did we perform it or postpone it?

The unnecessary gibe: did we say it or hold it back?

Did we live by false values?

Did we deceive others?

Did we deceive ourselves?

Did we acquire only possessions

or did we acquire new insights as well?

Did we fear what the crowd would say

and keep quiet when we should have spoken out?

Did we think only of ourselves?

Did we live our lives in a way that brought us closer to God?

and if not, then have we learned and will we change?

Eili, Eili

Shelo yigamer le'olam

Hachol v'hayam,

Rishrush shel hamayim,

B'rak hashamayim

T'filat ha'adam.

אֱלֹהִים, אֱלֹהִים

שֶׁלֹא יִגְמַר לְעוֹלָם

הַחֹל וְהַיָּם,

רִשְׁרוּשׁ שֶׁל הַמַּיִם,

בְּרַק הַשָּׁמַיִם

תְּפִלַּת הָאָדָם.

Oh God, My God

I pray that these things never end:

The sand and the sea

The rush of the waters,

The crash of the heavens,

The prayer of the heart.

For the sin we committed against you, through evading and avoiding, because we could not face the truth.

For our flight into hypocrisy and deception because we did not dare to speak it.

For the facts we dissembled, and all we glossed over, for the excuses we made.

For feeding our bodies and starving our souls.

For interfering with the souls of others, and neglecting their needs

For shifting our responsibilities, for reproaches and recriminations.

For our foolishness, our folly and false standards.

For seeing these things only in others, never in ourselves.

For our complacency which blinds us, and our self-righteousness which lessens us.

For calculating kindness and measuring without pity.

For charity that is cold, and prayers without feeling.

For withholding our love.

For the appeals that we ignored, and the people whom we refused.

For the affection which died, and our lives that became bitter.

For the causes which faded, the ideals we neglected, and the opportunities we lost.

For the fear of change and renewal, and our unbelief.

For saying prayers aloud, but refusing to listen.

For being our own worst enemy.¹

¹ Taken from Gates of Awe

Silent Meditation (for casting “sins” into the water)

Repentance Inside

This I confess to myself:

I have taken my transgressions with me,
Carrying them year-by-year into my hours and days,
My lapses of conscience
And indiscretion with words,
My petty judgments
And my vanity,
Clinging to grief and fear, anger and shame,
Clinging to excuses and to old habits.
I’ve felt the light of heaven,
Signs and wonders in my own life,
And still will not surrender to holiness and light.

God of redemption,
With Your loving and guiding hand
Repentance in prayer is easy.
Repentance inside,
Leaving my faults and offenses behind,
Is a struggle.
In Your wisdom You have given me this choice:
To live today as I lived yesterday,
Or to set my life free to love You,
To love Your people,
And to love myself.

God of Forgiveness, help me to leave my transgressions behind,
To hear Your voice,
To accept Your guidance,
And to see the miracles in each new day.

Blessed are You,
God of Justice and Mercy,
You set Your people on the road to t’shuva.

Alden Solovy,
The Grateful Heart, p. 55

Mei'olam Ad-Olam Atah Eil

מְעוֹלָם עַד-עוֹלָם אַתָּה אֵל

Forever and ever you are God

Hear our voice, Eternal God; have compassion upon us, and with that compassion accept our prayer.

*Help us to return to You, O God; then truly shall we return.
Renew our days as in the past.*

Consider our words; look into our inmost thoughts.

Do not cast us away from Your presence, do not remove Your holy spirit.

Do not cast us away when we are old; as our strength diminishes, do not abandon us.

Do not abandon us, Eternal God; do not be far from us.

For You, God, do we wait; and You, our God, will answer.

Return again, return again
Return to the land of your soul.
Return to what you are,
Return to who you are,
Return to where you are,
Born and reborn again,
Return again, return again,
Return to the land of your soul.

Shofar:

תְּקִיעַה גְּדוֹלָה
T'kiah G'dolah

תְּקִיעַה
T'kiah

תְּקִיעַה
T'kiah

לְשָׁנָה טוֹבָה תִּכְתְּבוּ וְתִחַתֶּמְוּ!

L'shanah tovah tikateivu v'teichateimu!

May you be inscribed and sealed for a good year!