

Toss and Keep Stones for Tashlich

Tashlich, the custom of 'casting away our sins' traditionally takes place at the side of a river, stream, or live body of water. Many people use small pieces of bread to throw into the water to literally and symbolically emptying their pockets into flowing water, to wash away our sins.

If you are doing this at home, consider turning on a garden hose, or filling up a small pool or bucket.

Preparation:

As a family, have a conversation about how each person can make themselves better. How can you be nicer to other people? What are one or two things about yourself that you could change or strengthen? What are some things that you are proud of and want to continue?

Decorate 'toss' and 'keep' stones. Toss stones will be things that you want to get rid of and throw away. Keep stones will be things that you want to do or get better at in the coming year. You will keep the stones as a reminder to yourself throughout the year.

At the side of the water:

Bring your rocks to the water. One at a time, say out loud what each rock symbolizes, and either toss it into the water, or keep it by putting it in your pocket.

Some Prayers for Tashlich:

A Prayer for Masked Tashlich

With devotion to the preservation of life,
as I stand today physically masked,
let me be spiritually unmasked.
May I have the courage to see my wrongdoings,
And the will to draw nearer to holiness,
That no mask, no disguise, no veil,
separates me from my loved ones,
from my own truest self,
and from You, God, Source of All.

A Prayer for Tashlich

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 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.

These PJ Library books offer easy to understand explanations of Tashlich for younger children:

[Happy New Year, Beni](#) by Jane Zalben

Recommended for children 3 to 5 years old

[New Year at the Pier: A Rosh Hashanah Story](#) by April Halprin Wayland

Recommended for children 5 to 7 years old

[Tashlich at Turtle Rock](#) by Susan Schnur

Recommended for children 7 to 8 years old