

Parent of a Bar Mitzvah

AN IMMERSION CEREMONY

Intention

כוונה KAVANAH

To be read before preparing for immersion:

As my son grows from a child to a man, teach me how to hold him close and let him go; how to protect him from the world and expose him to the world; how to guide him and trust him.

Give me strength, God, and confidence and wisdom.

Watch over him, God. Teach him to believe in himself and to have faith in goodness.

Give him courage, humility, happiness and the love of good friends.

Bless our family, God, with health, with peace, with joy and with love. Amen.¹

Immersion

טבילה T'VILAH

To be read at the mikveh's edge before you enter the water:

I give thanks for the moment in which my child becomes a Bar Mitzvah and for the years of growth and learning that have preceded it. As my child affirms his commitment to the ideals and *mitzvot* of our faith, my soul is joyful and my mind is at peace.²

FIRST IMMERSION

Slowly descend the steps into the mikveh waters and immerse completely so that every part of your body is covered by the warm water. When you emerge, recite the following blessing:

ברוך אתה, יי אלהינו, מלך העולם *Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech ha'olam*
אשר קדשנו בטבילה במים חיים. *asher kidshanu bi-t'vilah b'mayyim hayyim.*

Blessed are You, God, Majestic Spirit of the Universe
who makes us holy by embracing us in living waters.³

SECOND IMMERSION

To be read before you immerse:

I pray that my child will always cherish his precious inheritance. May his heart be filled with joy, his mind pursue knowledge, wisdom and insight. May he be a worthy sustainer of the teachings of Torah; teachings that have given light, meaning and inspiration to all humanity.⁴

Take a deep breath and exhale completely, while gently and completely immersing for the second time.

When you emerge, recite the following blessing:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, *Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech ha'olam*
שֶׁהֶחַיֵּנוּ, וְקִיַּמָּנוּ, וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזַמַּן הַזֶּה. *shehecheyanu, v'kiy'manu, v'higianu la'zman hazeh.*

Blessed are You, Adonai, Creator of humanity, who has enabled us to witness this sacred moment in your life and in ours and in the life of God.⁵

THIRD IMMERSION

To be read before you immerse:

O God, make me a worthy example to my child. Let nothing estrange me from him and from You.

Help me to renew my attachment to the Covenant of Israel,
to walk hand in hand with my child in the ways of righteousness and truth.

Relax, and let your body soften, as you slowly and completely immerse for the third time.

A Closing Intention

כוונה KAVANAH

(Optional)

Protect my child from my secret wish
to make him over in my image and illusions.

Let him move to the music that he loves
dissonant perhaps to me.⁶

ATTRIBUTIONS

This ceremony was created by Matia Rania Angelou, Deborah Issokson and Judith D. Kummer for Mayyim Hayyim Living Waters.

1 Levy, Naomi. *Talking to God: personal prayers for times of joy, sadness, struggle, and celebration*. New York: A. A. Knopf, 2002, p. 108. Adapted

2 Stern, Chaim, Berman, Donna, Graham, Edward and Poller, H. Leonard. *On the Doorposts of Your House*. New York: Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1994 p. 125. Adapted

3 Created by Mayyim Hayyim Ritual Creation Team, 2004

4 Levy, Naomi. *Talking to God: personal prayers for times of joy, sadness, struggle, and celebration*. New York: A. A. Knopf, 2002, p. 108. Adapted

5 Interpretive English translation by Matia Rania Angelou, Deborah Issokson and Judith D. Kummer

6 Ezekiel, Nissim. Adapted



Mayyim Hayyim

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