

DIY *Tashlich*: for Families

CENTRAL SYNAGOGUE'S GUIDE AND SERVICE

Are you familiar with the ceremony of *Tashlich*, or have you always wondered what it was all about? Are you a veteran *Tashlich* observer, but want not sure how to share *Tashlich* with your family this year? If so, our *Tashlich* FAQ below might be right for you.

Tashlich FAQ

What is *Tashlich*?

Tashlich is a ritual for the first day of Rosh HaShanah. It is not a mandatory part of the holiday. Like so many rituals, *Tashlich* is all about symbols.

Traditionally during *Tashlich*, Jews go to a body of running water, empty their pockets of crumbs, and throw the crumbs into the water while reciting special passages of scripture and prayers. The crumbs are meant to represent the sins we've been carrying around with us throughout the year. Throwing them into the water represents our hope that we can take our sins, ask forgiveness of God and one another, and then cast them away. The running body of water represents our hope that once our symbolic sins are cast away, we will not return to our old ways. Our wrong actions should be swept away, never to return.

Why is the ceremony called *Tashlich*?

Tashlich is a Hebrew verb that means "You will cast."

What do I need?

Tashlich can be performed in groups or alone. While communities sometimes gather together to take part in this tradition, this year we are encouraging everyone to perform the ritual in smaller groups or individually to encourage safe social distancing. Bring the service texts found on the next page. If you have a garment with a pocket full of schmutz (crumbs), so much the better. (No judgment!). If you recently did laundry and your clothes are crumb-free (good for you!) you can bring a bit of stale bread to crumble and cast off. Don't bring a whole loaf. We aren't feeding the fish; we're casting off our sins. No need to ruin ecosystems to do it.

Where can I perform the ritual?

Tashlich can be performed at any flowing body of water: rivers (Hudson River), streams, canals (Gowanus), straits (The Narrows), creeks, estuaries (East "River" and Long Island Sound), bays (New York Bay or Newark Bay), or oceans.

Tashlich for Kids*

Tashlich is a great way for kids to connect to the themes of the High Holy Days. Children of all ages can think about their behaviors from the past year and pick a couple of things they want to change in the coming year.

Tashlich for Toddlers

We recommend reading **Tashlich at Turtle Park** by Susan Schnur and Anna Schnur Fishman together with your kids. Then, use your bathtub or kitchen sink to perform *Tashlich*; using bath crayons, have your children draw what type of behavior they want to change, then have them wash away the drawings to start anew.

Tashlich for Elementary Schoolers

Watch our “Shoulda Done Better” video with your children. Talk to your kids about their behavior in the last year. Ask them: What do they want to improve or change? If you can’t get to a moving body of water, take sidewalk chalk outside and have your child draw or write what they want to symbolically cast away this year. Use water balloons to erase the sins and start anew.

Tashlich for Middle School and beyond

Encourage your middle schooler to think about ways their behavior impacts concentric circles of their lives – themselves, their families, their friends, and the larger communities of which they are a part. Ask them about two or three ways they’d like to change their behavior in the coming year. Take a stroll to a moving body of water and perform *Tashlich* together.

***Check out this resource from the [PJ Library](#) for more ideas and inspiration.**