

BIRKOT HASHAHAR

ברכות השחר

Netilat Yadayim (handwashing):

Upon waking wash the hands pouring water from a cup over your hands either two or three times in succession. Recite the following blessing while doing so:

*Nevarekh et haḥayim v'et ha'or ba'adam,
asher meḥadsheinu b'masorteinu al netilat yadayim.*

We are renewed by our customs as we wash the hands and bless life and the light of humanity.

Tallit (prayer shawl):

Face east or facing natural light. Spread the tallit wide in front of you and look at it while saying this blessing.

*Bar'khi nafshi et ha'or haboker. Barukh ha'or
ba'adam barukh ha'or ba'olam, asher meḥadsheinu
b'masorteinu l'hitateif batzitzit u'tallit.*

I am blessed by the light of the morning. Blessed is the light in humanity, Blessed is the light in the world, which renews us with our traditions as we wrap ourselves in the fringes and shawl.



Once the blessing is complete, wrap it around yourself. Many wrap it over their head for a few moments, to fully surround themselves in the masoret (custom), before settling the tallit back on their shoulders.

Kavannah (concentration):

Closing my eyes. For a minute or so just breathe and paying attention to my breath. Breathing in and out. If thoughts or images enter my mind, I dismiss them and let them go. Returning my focus to breathing.

Nishmati Tehorah (my breath is pure):

The breath within me is pure, creating me, forming me, circulating in me, preserving me, and in the future, departing from me. All the time that this breath is within me, I am thankful for life¹. I give thanks for the lives of my ancestors and for all who dwell upon the earth.

Zemirat Hoda'a (songs of gratitude):

Mizmor shir l'yom hazeh (on shabbat say: l'yom hashabat)

Tov l'hodot lahayim, ul'zamer b'simhah hayom

Lehagid baboker hasdeinu ve'rakhmanuteinu baleilot

Alei asor va-alei-navel; alei higayon bekhinor.

Ma gadlu ma'aseinu b'ahavah, meod amku machsheveteinu

¹ V'khol- z'man shehan'shamah b'kirbi, modeh/dah/det ani

Sing a song for the day (on shabbat say: for the sabbath day). It is good to live with gratitude, and to express this with happy songs on this day; to declare our lovingkindness in the morning, and our compassion at night. We sing our songs with instruments of ten strings, with the psaltery, and with a solemn sound upon the harp. How great are works of love, and deep mindful thoughts.

Hodu L'Kehillah:

הוֹדוּ לַקְהִילָה קְרָאוּ בְשִׁמֵי הַדְּיָעוּ בְּעַמִּים עֲלִילֹתֵם

Hodu l'kehilah, kiru vishmei haverim, hodi'u va'amim alilotam.

שִׁירוּ לֵן זַמְרוּ לֵן שִׁיחוּ בְּכֹל־נִפְלְאוֹתֵם

Shiru lan zamru lan shihu b'khol-nifl'otam

זָכְרוּ נִפְלְאוֹתֵם וְחֶסֶד אֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ

Zikhru nifl'otam v'hessed asher 'asu.

עֲבְדוּ חֶסֶד זֶרַע יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב בְּחַרְתֶּם בְּבְרִית

Ivdu hessed zera' Yisra'el b'nai Ya'kov b'hartem bab'rit

זֹת הַבְּרִית לְאַלְף דּוֹר

Zot hab'rit l'elef dor

Be thankful for community, call upon the names of your friends, speak of their deeds. Sing praises for them, acknowledge their accomplishments. Remember the good works that they have done and the kindness they have shown. Serve the cause of kindness, oh descendants of Israel, children of Jacob, choose the covenant. For this will be our covenant for a thousand generations.

Modeh Ani (gratitude)²:

Recite the following blessings:

*Modeh ani kol boker shehazra alai
hanishmati modeh ani al beged asher
al gufi shelo ihyeh li kar, sheshomer alai.*



I am grateful every morning for the return of my breath. I am grateful for the clothes on my body, which protect me and keep me from the cold.

*Modeh ani kol boker al ha'or al etzem hayoti modeh ani al lehem asher
al shulhani shelo ehyeh ra'ev shelo eda ke'ev.*

I am grateful every morning for light, for the fact that I am alive. I am grateful for the bread on my table, so I won't know hunger, so I won't feel pain.

*Modeh ani kol boker al kochi al haverim sheli ve'al mishpaha sheli. Modeh ani
al geshem shanata besdotai li'do'ug le'ohavai natat li hayai.*

I am grateful every morning for my strength, for my friends and family. I am grateful for the rain which pours on my fields, to care for my loved ones, for my life.

² Modeh ani (m), Modah ani (f), Modet ani (nb)

Birkot Hashahar (dawn blessings):

Blessed is the understanding to distinguish between day and between night.³

Blessed is the opening of the eyes, and the release from oppression.

Blessed is the the gift of clothes to the naked, and the liberation from poverty.

Blessed is strength to the weary, and the water upon the earth.

Blessed are the steps of humanity, and the provision to those in need.

Blessed are the people of Israel, and the wonderful diverse nations of the earth.

Blessed is the ingathering of people in service to community.

Blessed is the removal of sleep from my eyes and the removal of exhaustion from my eyelids.

May it be my will, that I am accustomed in the Torah of life and attached to my values. That I may not fall short, neither to iniquity, nor to testing, nor to disgrace. And that I may be distanced from the evil inclination and attached to goodness. And may my inclination compel me to serve humanity. And may I today and everyday, be gracious, lovingly-kind, and compassionate in my eyes and in the eyes of all who see me, that they may bestow upon me good kindnesses. Blessed are all who bestow good kindnesses to all peoples.

³ Barukhah havina l'haḥvil bein yom u'vein lailah

May I be spared today and every single day, from the arrogant, and from my arrogance, from any evil person, from the evil inclination, from mishaps, from the evil eye, from slander, negativity and from the hatred of life, from injustice and from a false accuser. And ultimately may I be spared from misery.

Amen.⁴

⁴ This meditation is a kavvanah (intention) for the upcoming day. We preemptively proscribe all negative influences and impulses, seeking instead positivity and truth.