



Netilat Yadayim

Traditional Handwashing Blessing

אֲשֶׁר יָבֹא אֶל-תּוֹךְ הַפֶּה לֹא יטַמֵּא אֶת-הָאָדָם אִפְס
אֲשֶׁר יֵצֵא מִתּוֹךְ הַפֶּה הוּא יטַמֵּא אֶת-הָאָדָם:

*It is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but what comes out of the mouth;
this defiles a person. - Jesus*

Some of the Jewish sages have said that, immediately after arising, you should wash your hands from a vessel like the laver a priest used before performing his service in the Holy Temple. The morning ritual of washing oneself is sanctified by the *netilat yadayim*:



בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ עַל נְשִׁילַת יָדַיִם.

*Blessed art Thou, LORD our God, King of the universe, who has sanctified
us with his commandments and commanded us about handwashing.*

Note: this is the same blessing said after Shabbat Kiddush and during other Jewish holiday rituals.



Some Rabbinic authorities state that you should perform *netilat yadayim* before you get out of bed, before you touch food, and before you go to bed. Netilat yadayim is also part of the Passover Seder. Specially crafted hand-washing cups and basins are often used for these ceremonies.



Ritualistic Hand Washing

The ritual of *netilat yadayim* is actually a “ceremonial” cleansing. In fact, before engaging in this ritual, your hands should already be clean! Once your hands are clean, you fill a smooth-rimmed jug or glass with water, and pour it over your hands. Certain Rabbinical authorities state that you should pour the water three times on each hand - right, left, right, left, right, left. After “washing” the hands, they are clasped together and the blessing is recited.

Transliterated:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,

ha-'o-lam me-lekh e-lo-hei-nu Adonai at-tah ba-rukh
the universe king (of) our God Lord are you Blessed

אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ עַל נְטִילַת יָדַיִם.

ya-dai-yim ne-tilat 'al ve-tsi-va-nu be-mits-vo-tav kid-de-sha-nu a-she-
hands washing and commanded us with his sanctified us who
about commandments

*Barukh attah Adonai Eloheinu melekh ha'olam,
asher kiddeshanu be'mitzvotav ve'tzivanu al netilat yadayim.*