



Netilat Yadayim

Traditional Handwashing Blessing

אֲשֶׁר יָבֵא אֶל-תּוֹךְ הַפֶּה לֹא יִטְמָא אֶת-הָאָדָם אִפְסֵי
אֲשֶׁר יֵצֵא מִתּוֹךְ הַפֶּה הוּא יִטְמָא 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 יְיָ הוֹה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ עַל נְטִילַת 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.

