

## Mikvah Ritual for Retirement      Rabbi Ellen Weinberg Dreyfus

[Thanks to MayyimHayyim.org for their resources in helping me create this ritual.]

### **First Immersion:    Past**

I have had decades of busyness,  
    of work with meaning,  
    of excitement and challenge.  
I have had wonderful opportunities  
    and also feelings of limitation.  
I have done what I could do,  
    which never seemed to be enough.  
I have grown where I was planted.  
I have given of my time and energy,  
    and I have accomplished a great deal.  
I have loved my work, and it is hard to let go.  
I have amazing memories, much experience,  
    and many stories to tell.  
Now it is time to put that behind me, and move on.

Blessing:   ...*al hat'vilah*

### **Second Immersion:    Future**

As today I celebrate my life's continued unfolding, I am awestruck by the wonder of my being. And so I pray that kindness and compassion may be on my lips, that strength and courage may be with me in my comings and my goings, and that I may continue to learn from and to teach those dear to me. O God my creator, as You are the first and the last, may my life ever be a song of praise to You.

(Excerpted from Richard F. Address, To Honor and Respect, URJ Press)

The possibilities are endless. The future is open. That is somewhat scary, but I will need to create my own structure, and make my time meaningful.

To take the first step  
To sing a new song –  
Is to close one's eyes  
and dive  
into unknown waters.  
For a moment knowing nothing risking all  
But then to discover  
The waters are friendly  
The ground is firm.

And the song –

The song rises again.

- Ruth Sohn

### **Third Immersion: Present**

*Hineni.* Here I stand, on the way to the next step in my journey, knowing I can continue creating a full life for myself, knowing that I have a circle of loved and loving ones who will celebrate my endeavors, knowing that I am sheltered beneath the wings of the *Shechinah*, knowing my own power.

Blessing: ...*shehecheyanu*

Song: *Lechi Lach*

Lyrics by Debbie Friedman & Savina Teubal (based on Genesis 12:1-2)

*Lechi lach* to a land that I will show you  
*Lech l'cha* to a place you do not know  
*Lechi lach* on your journey I will bless you  
And you shall be a blessing, you shall be a blessing  
You shall be a blessing *lechi lach*

*Lechi lach* and I shall make your name great  
*Lech l'cha* and all shall praise your name  
*Lechi lach* to the place that I will show you  
*L'simchat chayim, l'simchat chayim*  
*L'simchat chayim lechi lach.*  
And you shall be a blessing, you shall be a blessing  
You shall be a blessing *lechi lach.*