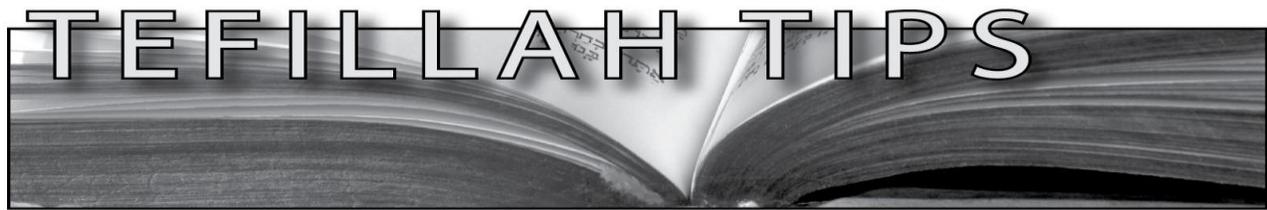


TEFILLAH TIPS



Veneemar Ki Fadah Hashem Et Yaakov – Gaal Yisrael ונאמר כי פדה ד' את יעקב וגאלו מיד חזק ממנו ברוך אתה ד' גאל ישראל

To experience meaningful prayer is an art and a skill. There are many different portals towards meaningful prayer. For some, it is the music, the *niggunim*, which lift their souls and join the hearts and voices of many in unison, to praise and demonstrate gratitude to *Hashem*. For others, it is the poetry and beauty of the language and expressions in our prayers that inspire attention and reverence to G-d. After years of *tefillah* study, one of the portals I enter to achieve potent prayer is concentrating on the sources of the verses referenced in our *Tefillot*.

Last week, we explored the verse *Mi Kamocha* extracted from the Song of the Sea, when our ancestors, together with the entire world cried out in joy '*Mi Kamocha*' – 'Who is like You G-d', girded in holiness and glory. In this *Tefillah* Tip, I intend to examine the concluding phrase before the blessing of redemption – *Baruch Atoh...gaal Yisrael*.

We are taught that our enslavement and dramatic exodus from Egypt is not only the seminal period in the formation of our nation Israel, but also the prototype for all future exiles and redemptions. Therefore, so many of our *mitzvot* and prayers refer and reflect upon our 210 years in Egypt and our miraculous departure that we reenact each year on *Pesach*. The *mitzvot* of *tzitzit*, *tefillin*, *shema*, *kiddush*, *pidyon haben*... are all related to our Egyptian exile and exodus.

The challenge of the prophetic architects of our *siddur* was not only to invoke our past glory, but to provide genuine palpable hope and faith for Jews throughout the millennia in difficult and trying times as well as in pleasant and joyous times – always keeping it relevant. The way they accomplished this in our *tefillah*, was to include the verse from Jeremiah 31:10, '*Veneemar ki fadah Hashem et Yaakov*'... As a summation statement it says, 'G-d will redeem Jacob from an even stronger enemy' before concluding the blessing *Gaal Yisrael* –who redeems Israel. Chapter 31 in Jeremiah, tells of the great Exodus of Egypt (like our prayer) and then states that just as G-d redeemed us from Egypt, so too He will redeem us again anew. In 31:3 Jeremiah writes, '*Evneych Venivneyt Betulat Yisrael*' – I, G-d, will build a divine Third Temple that will never be destroyed. **So in one moment of prayer during *Maariv* we invoke the euphoria of the splitting of the Red Sea in Egypt 3300 years ago and then fast forward 1000 years to the redemptive prophecy of Jeremiah in Jerusalem in 630BCE.** While praying we literally travel through history and express longing for our destiny.

It is the usage of a perfect shade of color amid an array of colors that creates its stunning beauty within a painting. The perfectly timed correct chord amid a full concert of flowing music releases the beauty of the entire symphony. So too in our prayers, invoking a specific verse creates the perfect moment to acknowledge our past and future redemption.

Take Home Tip:

An initiative of the Orthodox Union Department of Community Services.
www.oucommunity.org 212.613.8188

When we notice in our prayers an array of verses from disparate sources let's consider why they specifically have been inserted together. This will lend new meaning to our prayers.

Shabbat Shalom,

Rabbi Ephraim Epstein

Congregation Sons of Israel, Cherry Hill, for Tefillah Tips

Orthodox Union Department of Community Services

Frank Buchweitz, National Director

Hannah Farkas, Program Associate

Maya Carni, Administrative Assistant