

# TEFILLAH TIPS

## Mi Chamochah Baeylim Hashem

Our *Tefilloth* are arranged in many different styles. Many of our prayers are codified Psalms specifically chosen to be chanted as a form of praise and acknowledgement to G-d. Many of our prayers are blessings codified in the *Talmud* that express gratitude to G-d for all that He does for us each day. Sometimes our sages include actual verses from the *Torah* amid prayers and blessings to emphasize and punctuate the theme of the prayer. For example, towards the conclusion of *Emet Ve-emunah* the *Chazzan* reads aloud: *Umalchuto Beratzon kiblu Aleyhem Moshe...Besimchah Rabbah Veamru Kulam* – the Israelites accepted the kingship of G-d upon them and joyfully shouted in unison... then the entire congregation says aloud the verse from Exodus 15:11, *Mi Chamochah Baeylim Hashem....Norah Tehilloth Oseh Feleh..Who is like You G-d, You are too awesome for our praises!* In the morning during *Shacharit* we also say aloud *Mi Chamochah* after *Shema* just before reciting the blessing of redemption - *Geulah* and saying the *Amidah*.

The question is why does our prayer specifically invoke Exodus 15:11 – *Mi Chamocha*? There are nineteen verses in the *Az Yashir* – Song of the Sea. Why was this particular verse chosen for us to chant, when there are so many other verses in *Az Yashir* that depict G-d's strength, providence and greatness – so why *Mi Kamochah*?

The *Netziv* - Rabbi Naftali Zvi Yehuda Berlin, (1816-1893) explains the verse – *Mi Chamocha Baeylim Hashem* – Who is like G-d the great source of **kindness** – E-I, the name of G-d - refers to kindness – a hallmark of G-d and the Jewish people. Perhaps the architects of our *Siddur* wanted us to focus on G-d's kindness.

The *Malbim*, Rabbi Meir Leibush Ben Jehiel Michel Weiser (1809 – 1879) explains that this verse #11 is unique because, as opposed to the other verses, it was not only the Israelites that chanted it, but all the nations of the world also joined in. Our sages remark that the miracles of the *Yam Suf* were felt and known all over the world. Therefore, perhaps the architects of the *Siddur* chose verse #11 because it was chanted universally.

Finally, I would like to humbly suggest that verse #11 – *Mi Chamochah* is the verse in *Az Yashir* that not only relates to the story of the *Kriyat Yam Suf* - The Splitting of the Sea; like the previous and subsequent verses but can also be relevant to G-d and His maintaining, sustaining and guiding His world in our times as well. Therefore, perhaps the intent is that while we reexamine and reflect on our Exodus from Egypt every morning and evening, we must also recognize that the same G-d that took us out 3324 years ago from Egypt, is presenting His strength, kindness, providence and love to us every single day all across the world. And just as at the time of the Exodus the entire world joined the Israelites in chanting *Mi Chamocha...*, so too, in our time we hope, pray

for and look forward to the time that all nations of the world will recognize *Hashem* as the true and one G-d of the world.

**Take Home Tip: When *davening* from your *Siddur* each day, take note of which specific biblical verses are quoted in our prayers and consider why they particularly were chosen to be part of the *Tefillot*. This will enable the *Tefillot* to be even more personal and meaningful for all that recite them.**

Shabbat Shalom,

**Rabbi Ephraim Epstein**, for Tefillah Tips

**Orthodox Union Department of Community Services**

**Frank Buchweitz**, National Director

**Hannah Farkas**, Program Associate

**Maya Carni**, Administrative Assistant

Prepared by Rabbi Ephraim Epstein—Congregation Sons of Israel, Cherry Hill, NJ

[Rabbiepstein@sonsisrael.org](mailto:Rabbiepstein@sonsisrael.org)

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