

שִׁירָה חֲדָשָׁה

Prefix – לְ Meaning – before a word means “to or for.”

Prefix – וְ Meaning – before a word means “and.”

Words in the prayer with the prefixes - לְשִׁמּוֹךְ וְאָמְרוּ לְעוֹלָם וְהַמְּלִיכוֹת

The שִׁירָה חֲדָשָׁה is found at the end of the section of the שְׁמַע and its blessings and just before the Amidah. It is the second paragraph of the מִי כְּמִכָּה and in some congregations is said by the leader of the service.

The מִי כְּמִכָּה expresses our absolute faith in the one God. We make it clear that historically and today we trust in God to protect us, to save us, and to be our support in all times of our lives and in all situations.

Traditionally, the מִי כְּמִכָּה is believed to have been sung by the Hebrews as they were crossing the divided Red Sea. The story is told that as the Hebrew were fleeing the Pharaoh and Egypt they were trapped between the Egyptian army and the Red Sea. Even though Moses raised his staff, the waters did not part. Moses plunged his staff into the water and still they did not part. The people cried and prepared themselves to be slaughtered by the Egyptians. At that point, one man, Nachson, showed that he had complete faith in God.

He began singing the מִי כְּמִכָּה and walked into the great sea. As he walked the water reached his knees. He still sang and he kept walking. The water reached his waist but still he sang and kept walking. The water reached his shoulders and he continued. The water reached his chin and he could still be heard singing and he still walked on. At the moment the water completely covered Nachson's mouth and nose so that he could not breath, God parted the waters. Shown the way by Nachson, the Hebrew began singing and passed through the divided waters.

Vocabulary and Translation

Song – שִׁירָה

New – חֲדָשָׁה

All, Everyone – כָּלֶם

Thanked – הוֹדוּ

And said - וְאָמְרוּ

Past Roots

י – י – ח - Life

כ – ר – ב - Bless

ר – ח – ב - Choose

ל – א – Roots of the names of God

Translation

Inspired, the redeemed sang a new song for the sake of your name at the shores of the sea.

As one together they gave thanks for your sovereignty and said:

Adonai will rule forever and ever.