



Who is like unto You? Micah 7:18-20

Who is like unto you, God,
 forgiving sins and overlooking transgressions
 for the heirs of your heritage?

You relinquish anger.

You delight in mercy.

You will have compassion upon us
 and show us how to subdue our weaknesses.

You will cast away our sins
 into the depths of the waters.

You will show us faithfulness as you did to Jacob
 and mercy as you did to Abraham
 as you promised since the days of old.

מי אל כְּמוֹךָ, נִשְׂא עֲוֹן וְעֵבֶר עַל
 פְּשָׁע, לְשֹׂאֲרִית, נִחַלְתּוּ:
 לֹא הִחְזִיק לְעַד אָפוּ,
 כִּי חִפֵּץ חֶסֶד הוּא.

לְשׁוּב יִרְחַמְנוּ, יִכַּבֵּשׁ עֲוֹנֵתֵינוּ;
 וּבְמַצְלוֹת יָם,
 כָּל חַטָּאוֹתֵם.

תִּתֵּן אֱמֶת לְיַעֲקֹב,
 חֶסֶד לְאַבְרָהָם,
 אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתָּ לְאַבְתֵּינוּ,
 מִיְמֵי קָדָם:

The 13 Attributes of God, Exodus 34:5-7

Adonai, Adonai, God
 compassionate and gracious,
 slow to anger,
 filled with loving-kindness and faithfulness,
 showing mercy for thousands of generations,
 abiding our transgressions and faults
 and redeeming our shortcomings.

יְהוָה יְהוָה יְהוָה, א-ל
 רַחוּם וְחַנּוּן--אֶרְךָ אַפִּים,
 וְרַב-חֶסֶד וְאֱמֶת.
 נֹצֵר חֶסֶד לְאֲלֹפִים,
 נִשְׂא עֲוֹן וּפְשָׁע וְחַטָּאָה; וְנִקְּה

Out of the depths I cry to you.

Lord, hear my voice.
If you punished every lapse, who could stand?
But you offer forgiveness,
showing your greatness.

My soul awaits you
more than a watchman waits for morning.
Put your hope in the Lord,
for only with God is there unfailing love
And full redemption from all our regrets.
(from Psalm 130)

Out of the straits of distress I called upon you.

And you answered me with liberation. (from
Psalm 118)

Blessed are those who revere you, O God.
A ruler does not triumph through an army,
nor a soldier by strength.
You are our shield.
For you, the soul yearns, and the heart rejoices.
May your love rest upon us. We put our hope in
you. (from Psalm 33)

God, consider our recitation of these verses as if we had comprehended all the meanings that lie within them. Cast our sins into the depths of the waters and bestow upon us the grace of your deliverance and mercy. May we strive always to attain higher and higher teshuvah.

Pour out your heart like water before God. (from Lamentations)

Intention (Kavanah) and Reflection

Knowing Ourselves: Let us bring to mind some things we are dissatisfied with, actions we regret, resentments and obsessions we would like to be free of. Let us cast a crumb into the water as we quietly name each one.

Having Compassion: "Love thy neighbor as thyself." As we hold these crumbs, let us summon up compassion for human failings. If we do not see and have patience with our own faults, how can we practice charity towards others? If we hold on to hurts and resentments towards others, how can we ask God to move from Judgment to Mercy towards us? Done in the spirit of *teshuvah*, accepting human frailty can bring us closer to each other. As we cast these crumbs, let us replace harsh judgments with an openness to sympathy and understanding.

Letting Go: Out of habit, fear, or need for familiarity and comfort, we hold onto old ways even while we yearn to let them go. Let us take some crumbs and clench our fist tight around them. We are in control, but we also feel the strain of constriction. Like a climber who must let go of a safe handhold to reach a higher plateau, we must trust that with God's grace, we can face whatever lies ahead. As we open our hand and toss the crumbs, let us breathe out a sigh of relief. When we relinquish control over petty things, we affirm our faith in God.

Creating an Intention for the Coming Year: Let us feel the smallness of the crumbs in our hand. Just as a loaf is made up of crumbs, so are our lives made up of the small actions we perform every day. Let us think of one helpful thing that is small enough to do often in the coming year and vow to send many good deeds into the world like we send these crumbs.

Shaking Out Our Clothes: Our failings attach to us like crumbs to our clothes. Let us follow the ancient custom of shaking the corners of our clothing three times, saying together:

***May we shake ourselves from sin
and be sealed in the Book of Life for a good and sweet new year!***