
Womens Tefila On-Line Class

Lesson 14 - The Origin Of Reciting The Mourner's Kaddish

Source 1

מסכת סנהדרין דף קד' עמ' א'—ברא מזוכי אבא. אבא לא מזוכי ברא, דכתיב (דברים ל"ב)
ואין מידי מציל; אין אברהם מציל את ישמעאל, אין יצחק מציל את עשו.

A son can relieve the punishment of a deceased father. A father cannot relieve the punishment of a deceased son. This rule is based on a verse: (Deutoronomy 32) And there is no one who can deliver out of my hand. Avrohom could not save Yishmael and Yitzchak could not save Esau.

Source 2

מעשה ברבי עקיבא

An incident that occurred to Rabbi Akiva while walking on the road adjacent to a cemetery: Rabbi Akiva noticed a man in the cemetery who appeared to be unclothed and his body black as coal. He was carrying a large bundle of thorns on his head. It seemed to Rabbi Akiva that the man was alive and that he was galloping like a horse. Rabbi Akiva commanded the man to stop and the man stopped. Rabbi Akiva then inquired of him: why are you doing such tedious work? If you are a slave and your master forces you to work this hard, I will redeem you from him immediately; if you are poor and there are those who are taking advantage of your poverty, I will cause you to be rich. The man responded: please do not interfere with my work. You will cause me to anger those who are guarding me. Said Rabbi Akiva: what is all this and what is the purpose of your labor? The man said: In truth, I am deceased. I am required each day to collect wood. Said Rabbi Akiva: What was your occupation in the world from which you came? The man answered: I was a tax collector. I would favor the rich and oppress the poor. Said Rabbi Akiva: have you not heard from those who are persecuting you of a means by which you could be relieved of your punishment? Said the man: Please do not hold me up any longer. My supervisors are growing angrier. I am not one who can ever qualify for relief. I have heard them say: if only this poor man had left a son who could stand up in a congregation of people and say: Borchu Es Hashem Hamivorach with the congregation answering: Yibai Shmai Rabbah M'Vorach. This man would then be relieved of his punishment. But when I died I did not leave a surviving son but I did leave a pregnant wife. And I do not know if she gave birth to a son. But even if she did give birth to a son, I doubt that my wife would have taught him Torah because I left behind in the world no one who cared for me. Immediately, Rabbi Akiva accepted upon himself the responsibility of searching for the man's wife and to learn whether she had given birth to a son and if she did, to teach the son Torah so that the son could lead the services before a congregation. Rabbi Akiva then asked him: what was your name. He responded: Akiva. And what was your wife's name? Shoshniva. And the name of his city where I lived was Ludkia (a city on the Mediterranean coast of Syria).

Hearing this, Rabbi Akiva shuddered but did not allow his feelings to prevent him from going to the city and inquiring as to the man and his family. When Rabbi Akiva reached the city, he asked about the man. The residents responded: may his bones rot. Rabbi Akiva then asked about the man's wife. The residents answered: may her name be erased from memory. Rabbi Akiva next asked about the child. The residents said that he was never circumcised because the family was not interested in performing even the Mitzvah of

Womens Tefila On-Line Class

Milah. Immediately Rabbi Akiva circumcised the boy and started teaching the boy Torah but the boy would not absorb any of it. It was not until Rabbi Akiva fasted for 40 days that the boy started to accept any of the Torah learning. Then a voice was heard from heaven asking Rabbi Akiva: for this type of person you fasted? Rabbi Akiva answered: G-d, was not my intent to show him the correct path so that he may serve You? G-d then opened the boy's heart and the boy began to appreciate the Torah learning. He learned to recite Kriyat Shma and Birkhat Hamazone. Rabbi Akiva then arranged for the boy to stand in front of a congregation and to cry out: Barchu. Those present answered his cry with: Baruch Hashem Hamivorach. At that moment, the deceased man was relieved of his punishment. The decedent soon thereafter appeared to Rabbi Akiva in a dream and said to him: may it be His will that your soul rest in Gan Eden due to your having saved me from the judgment of Hell. Rabbi Akiva then began to expound upon the following verse from the Torah: (Psalms 135) G-d, Your name is forever; G-d you will be remembered from generation to generation. Based on this story, it became a custom that the person to lead the services on Motzei Shabbat was someone whose father or mother had died. That provided the mourner with the opportunity to call out Barchu and Kaddish.

Source 3

סידור רש"י—סימן רטז'—החזן אומר והוא רחום ברכו, תפילת ערבית, כסדר כל השנה, ויתפללו שמונה עשרה כסידרן, אלא שמבדילין בחונן הדעת, אתה חוננתנו וכו', קדיש שלם, ומבדיל על הכוס ומברך בורא מאורי האש לאור ששבת בו, הם הנירות שדלקו כל היום, ואם מוצאי שבת הוא, יאמרו ויתן לך, והקטן יאמר קדיש, ונפטרין לבתיהם בשלום.

The leader recites: V'Hoo Rachum Barchu, the Evening Service in the order as he does all year, and recites Shmona Esrei as always, except that he recites Havdalah; in the blessing Chonain Ha'Daat, Atah Chonuntanu, whole Kaddish, he recites Havdalah on a cup of wine, and makes the blessing on the fire using the candles that were burning throughout Shabbat, and if it is the end of Shabbat, they recite V'Yitain L'Cha, and a minor recites Kaddish and they go home in peace.

Source 4

מהזור ויטרי—סימן צג'—ה' חפץ למען צדקו יגדיל תורה ויאדיר: קדיש וכו'. וישב החזן ואומר: שיר מזמור לאסף...כי כל העמים ילכו איש בשם אלהיו ואנחנו נלך בשם ה' א—להינו לעולם ועד: ועמוד הנער ואומר קדיש ומדלג תתקבל ואומר יהא שלמא רבה. שכשהציבור אומר פסוק או משנה צריכין לומר קדיש אחריהם;

Source 5

מהזור ויטרי—סימן קא'—כי המלכות שלך היא—ולעולמי עד תמלוך בכבוד. כי אין לנו מלך אלא אתה ברוך אתה ה' המלך בכבודו תמיד ימלוך עלינו לעולם ועד ועל כל מעשיו: ואומר קדיש עד דאמירן. ועומדין לתפילה י"ח ואומר קדיש וכו'. והולך החזן ויושב במקומו ואומרי' כולם: פיטום הקטרת. . . יעמוד הנער ואומר קדיש בלא תתקבל. וקדיש זה אינו אלא להנך את התינוקות. ואינו בכלל שבע ביום הללתיך.

Hashem Chafetz L'Maan Tzidko Yagdil Torah V'Yaadir: Kaddish, and then the leader sits down. The congregation then recites: Shir Mizmor L'Assaf...Ki Kal Hamim Yalchu Ish B'Shem Elokeav V'Anachnu Nalaich B'Shem Hashem Alokainu L'Olam Va'ed. And the minor stands and recites

Womens Tefila On-Line Class

Kaddish and skips TiSkabel and says: Y'Hai Shlama Rabbah. When the congregation recites verses or a section of Mishna, the congregation must recite Kaddish afterwards; Ki Hamalchut Shelcha Hee OOL'Olmah Ad Timloch B'Kavod. Ki Ain Lanu Melech Elah Atah; Baruch Atah Hashem Hamelech Bichvodo Tamid Yimloch Aleinu L'Olam Vaed V'Al Kol Maasav. And he recites Kaddish until D'Amiran. They stand to recite Shmona Esrei and then say Kaddish. The leader then sits down and everyone recites Pitum Hakitoret...the minor stands and recites Kaddish without Tittkabel. And this Kaddish is recited solely for the purpose of educating young children. It is not considered one of the seven mandatory Kaddishes that are represented by the verse: Seven each day I will praise you.

Source 6

אור זרע ב' הלכות שבת סימן נ' ד"ה תפלת המוסף-מנהגנו בארץ כנען וכן מנהג בני רינוס
לאחר שיאמרו הצבור אין כא-להינו עומד היתום ואומר קדיש אבל בצרפת ראיתי שאינם
מקפידים על כך מי שיאמר קדיש אם נער יתום או נער שיש לו אב ואם וכמנהגנו מסתברא
משום מעשה שהיה דמעשה ברבי עקיבא.

Our custom in Bohemia and also the custom in the Rhineleand is that on Shabbos after the congregation recites Ain Kailokainu, the orphan stands and recites Kaddish but in France I saw that they are not concerned as to who recites the Kaddish whether it be a child who lost a parent or a child who has both parents. But our custom is more appropriate because of the story of Rabbi Akiva.

Source 7

ספר מטה משה-סימן רי"ג- עלינו אמר קדיש. ונמצא במדרשות שיש לבן לומר ברכו
ולהתפלל בצבור ובזה מציל את אביו ואת אמו מדינה של גהנים כדאיתא בתנחומא פ' נח
ובמסכת כלה פרק ר' יודא. ובשביל קטנים ובשביל מי שאינו יכול להתפלל תקנו לומר
קדיש זו בימי אבלו לכך נקרא לקדיש זו קדיש יתום.

After Aleinu they recite Kaddish. We learned in Midrashim that a son should recite Barchu and be the leader in synagogue. Through these acts he relieves the punishment of his deceased parents as it is written in Midrash Tanbuma for Parshat Noah and in Masechet Kallah in the chapter entitled: Rav Yuda. The practice of mourners reciting Kaddish during the mourning period was instituted because of minors and later because of adults who did not have the ability to lead in the services. It is for that reason that the Kaddish became known as the Orphan's Kaddish.

Womens Tefila On-Line Class

Source 8

A Tshuva by Rabbi Shlomo Chaim Hacohe Aviner

Rabbi Shlomo Chaim Hacohe Aviner is the head of Yeshivat Ateret Kohanim and Rabbi of the community of Bet-El in Israel. Reproduced from Sh'ailat Shlomo, Part 1 Section 21:

Question: I was commemorating a yahrzeit and was leading the services as schaliach tzibbur. When the time came to say the Mourner's Kaddish, I heard a guest start to say Kaddish in a loud voice. What conduct should I have followed: Attempt to say Kaddish louder than the guest in the hope that my voice would also be heard or should I have remained silent and allowed the guest to recite Kaddish by himself?

Answer: It is important to recite the Mourner's Kaddish. The practice is based on a report in the gemara that Rabbi Akiva had a dream in which he saw a man who appeared very disturbed. The man explained to Rabbi Akiva that while alive he had been a great transgressor and had therefore been judged to a sentence in gehenom. When Rabbi Akiva awoke, he sought out the son of the man that he had seen in the dream and instructed the son to say Kaddish. As a result, the man in the dream was rescued from gehenom. The deceased are rescued from a negative judgment when their children recite Kaddish because their children are saying a *davar sh'bekedusha*, a holy prayer, in honor of their mother or father, on the day of the yahrzeit and during the 12 months after their demise. By doing so, the soul of the departed rises through levels of judgment until they reach gan eden.

Nevertheless, despite the importance of reciting Kaddish, there are more important acts that a child can perform. As it is written in the *Kitzur Schulchan*

Aruch: although the recitation of Kaddish and other prayers are important for the departed, those acts are not what is most essential. What is most important is that the child walk in the correct path. When a child follows the correct path, he increases the honor of the departed. As it is written in the *Zohar* quoting from a *pasuk* in Malachi, 1, 6: a son should respect his father and as it is written in Exodus 20, 6: honor thy mother and father. After each parent departs, should a child believe that he is suddenly absolved from honoring that parent? That is not so. After a parent is deceased, there is an even greater obligation to honor the parent. If the son follows along the sinful path, certainly he dishonors his parent and he certainly embarrasses his family. But if the same son walks along the righteous path and does the correct things, he honors his parent both in front of those in this world and in front of those in the next world who stand in the presence of G-d. G-d will then have pity on the parent and honor the parent by giving the parent a place near G-d's seat of honor.

Womens Tefila On-Line Class

The Mishneh Breura wrote: If one can be the Schaliach Tzibbur, that is preferable to just reciting Kaddish. Despite this, the Kaddish plays a special role, as it was written in the book Yaish Nochlin: Our sages instituted a practice (saying Kaddish) that they thought every man was capable of performing. They hoped that at a minimum every child would recite Kaddish for his deceased parent because Kaddish was a prayer which was simple to learn (especially when everyone spoke Aramaic). Everyone is familiar with the prayer from the time they were young. The Yaish Nochlin continued: if a person is capable of being the Schaliach Tzibbur, he honors his parent in a greater manner. But the child can take steps on his own to honor his parents in other ways. In particular, studying Torah out of respect for the deceased is seven times more beneficial than being a Schaliach Tzibbur. It hastens the entry of the deceased into gan eden. And if the son has the ability to author new Torah ideas, it is an even greater benefit to the parent. Therefore in answer to the question, since you were the Schaliach Tzibbur, which was more important than simply reciting Kaddish, you should have allowed the guest to say the Kaddish by himself. There are however, some congregations, and in particular, congregations that follow the Sephardic tradition, in which all the mourners say Kaddish together, word by word. About this the Gesher Chaim wrote: That is not the practice followed in other congregations, particularly Ashkenazic congregations. Where you find two say Kaddish or when many say Kaddish, one often gets ahead

of the others, and the sound becomes confusing to the point that no one in the congregation can clearly hear the Kaddish. As a result the congregants do not know when to say “y’hai shmai raba...” In such a situation, not only was there no purpose in their reciting Kaddish but the mourners converted what was to be praise of G-d into something derogatory. And the Chasam Sopher made the same point that when the mourners do not read in unison, they destroy the purpose of the Kaddish.

As a result, two mourners should never compete with each other. It is preferable that the mourners divide the reciting of the Kaddishes for each prayer. That was the original custom among Jews as described by the early poskim. So if a guest comes and interferes with the recitation of the Kaddish by the others, it is better that everyone defers to the guest and stops saying the Kaddish or says Kaddish quietly rather than to compete with the guest and to cause confusion. If despite this, you still feel strongly that you should say Kaddish, then say Kaddish quietly while the Schaliach Tzibbur says Kaddish, repeating word for word. When the congregation answers amen to the Schaliach Tzibbur they will also be answering amen to you. That is the way we practice in our Beis Medresh, Hasidim Bet El, that the Schaliach Tzibbur says the Mourner’s Kaddish as representative of the mourners. If someone attempts to recite Kaddish with him, he would cause confusion. So the Rabbis there ruled that anyone who needs to say Kaddish should follow word for word silently along with the Schaliach Tzibbur.