

newCAJE Conference On Jewish Education

The Origin Of Kaddish

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Translation Of Kaddish

Magnified and sanctified be G-d's great Name in this world which He created according to His will. May He establish His kingdom, and; May He Hasten the coming of His annointed Messiah; in your life-time, and in the life-time of all the house of Israel, speedily and at a near time; and say you, Amen.

May His great Name be blessed for ever and ever.

Blessed, praised and glorified, exalted, extolled and honoured, adored and lauded be the Name of the Holy One, blessed be He, beyond all blessings and hymns, praises and songs, which can be uttered in this world; and say you, Amen.

May the prayers and supplications of the whole house of Israel be accepted in the presence of their Father who is in heaven; and say you, Amen.

May there be abundant peace from heaven, and life for us and for all Israel; and say you, Amen.

May He who makes peace in His high places, make peace for us and for all Israel; and say you, Amen.

וַיִּתְגַּדַּל וַיִּתְקַדַּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא. בְּעֵלְמָא
דִּי בְרָא כְרַעוּתֵיהּ, וַיְמַלִּיךְ מַלְכוּתֵיהּ,
וַיַּצְמַח פְּרָקְנָהּ וַיִּקְרַב מְשִׁיחָהּ. בְּחַיֵּיכוּן
וּבְיוֹמֵיכוּן וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל,
בְּעֵגְלָא וּבְזִמְן קָרִיב וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן:

יְהֵא שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעָלְמֵי
עֲלָמֵיָא.

יְתַבְרַךְ וַיִּשְׁתַּבַּח וַיִּתְפָּאֵר וַיִּתְרוֹמֵם
וַיִּתְנַשֵּׂא וַיִּתְהַדָּר וַיִּתְעַלֶּה וַיִּתְהַלָּל
שְׁמֵהּ דְקָדְשָׁא בְרִיךְ הוּא, לְעֵלְמָא מִן כָּל
בְּרַכְתָּא וְשִׁירְתָּא תְּשַׁבְּחָתָא וְנַחֲמָתָא,
דְּאִמְרִין בְּעֵלְמָא, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

תְּתַקַּבַּל צְלוֹתְהוֹן וּבְעוֹתְהוֹן דְּכָל בֵּית
יִשְׂרָאֵל קִדְּם אַבוּהוֹן דִּי בְשַׁמְיָא,
וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן: יְהֵא שְׁלָמָא רַבָּא מִן
שְׁמַיָּא וְחַיִּים טוֹבִים עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל
יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן:

עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמְרוֹמָיו, הוּא יַעֲשֵׂה
שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ, וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְאָמְרוּ
אָמֵן:

Kaddish is a messianic text that many believe was composed during the period of Rabbi Akiva and the Bar Kochva rebellion 132-135 CE and was recited by those who died Al Kiddush Hashem, martyrs deaths, during that period. Messianic texts are prayers in which the Jewish People express a hope that the Moshiach will come soon and open a world in which the entire human race recognizes the Jewish G-d as G-d. The great tragedies that struck Jewish communities during the last 2000 years were often viewed as the percusors of the coming of the Moshiach and led to the recital of messianic prayers as Jews were led to their deaths. The prayer of Aleinu L'Shabeach was recited by those who died a martyr's death in Blois, France in 1171 CE. Jews who were being led to their deaths in the concentration camps during the Holocaust sang Ani Ma'Mamin B'Emunah Sh'Laima Bi'Biyus Ha'Moshiach-I believe with unbreakable faith that the Moshiach will come.

Examples Of Messianic Prayers

אור הַדָּשׁ עַל צִיּוֹן תְּאִיר, וְנִזְכָּה כְּלָנוּ מִהֲרָה לְאוּרוֹ. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, יוֹצֵר הַמְּאוֹרוֹת.

וְהִבִּיאֵנוּ לְשָׁלוֹם מֵאַרְבַּע כַּנְפוֹת הָאָרֶץ, וְתוֹלִיכֵנוּ קוֹמְמֵיֹת לְאַרְצֵנוּ

תִּקַּע בְּשׁוֹפָר גָּדוֹל לְחֵרוּתֵנוּ, וְשָׂא גַם לְקַבֵּץ גְּלִיּוֹתֵינוּ, וְקַבְּצֵנוּ יַחַד מֵאַרְבַּע כַּנְפוֹת הָאָרֶץ. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, מְקַבֵּץ גְּדַחֵי עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל.

וְלִירוּשָׁלַיִם עִירְךָ בְּרַחֲמִים תֵּשׁוּב, וְתִשְׁכּוֹן בְּתוֹכָהּ פֶּאֶשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתָּ, וּבָנָה אוֹתָהּ בְּקִרְוֵב בְּיָמֵינוּ בְּנֵי עוֹלָם, וְכִסֵּא דָוִד מִהֲרָה לְתוֹכָהּ תִּכְיֵן. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, בּוֹנֵה יְרוּשָׁלַיִם.

אֵת צֶמַח דָּוִד עַבְדְּךָ מִהֲרָה תִצְמַיֵחַ, וְקַרְנּוֹ תִרְוַם בִּישׁוּעָתְךָ, כִּי לִישׁוּעָתְךָ קָנִינוּ כָּל הַיּוֹם. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, מִצְמִיחַ קַרְנֵי יִשׁוּעָה.

וְהֵשֵׁב אֵת הָעֲבוּדָה לְדָבִיר בֵּיתְךָ . . . וְתַחֲזִינָה עֵינֵינוּ בְּשׁוֹבְךָ לְצִיּוֹן בְּרַחֲמִים. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, הַמַּחְזִיר שְׂכִינָתוֹ לְצִיּוֹן.

מִמְקוֹמְךָ מְלֻכָנוּ תּוֹפִיעַ, וְתִמְלֹךְ עָלֵינוּ, כִּי מִחֲפִים אֲנַחְנוּ לָךְ. מִתִּי תִמְלֹךְ בְּצִיּוֹן, בְּקִרְוֵב בְּיָמֵינוּ, לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד תִּשְׁכּוֹן. תִּתְגַּדֵּל וְתִתְקַדַּשׁ בְּתוֹךְ יְרוּשָׁלַיִם עִירְךָ, לְדוֹר וָדוֹר וּלְנִצְחָה נְצָחִים. וְעֵינֵינוּ תִרְאִינָה מְלֻכוֹתֶיךָ, כַּדָּבָר הָאָמוֹר בְּשִׁירֵי עֲזָרָה, עַל יְדֵי דָוִד מְשִׁיחַ צְדָקָה:
יְמַלֶּךְ יְיָ לְעוֹלָם, אֱלֹהֵינוּ צִיּוֹן, לְדָר וָדָר, הִלְלוּ-הֵ.

עַל הַכֹּל יִתְגַּדֵּל וְיִתְקַדַּשׁ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח וְיִתְפָּאֵר וְיִתְרוֹמַם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא, שְׁמוֹ שֶׁל מֶלֶךְ מְלָכֵי הַמְּלָכִים, הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא, בְּעוֹלָמוֹת שָׁבְרָא, הָעוֹלָם הַזֶּה וְהָעוֹלָם הַבֹּא . . .

An Early Talmudic Reference To Kaddish

Translation: It has been taught: Rabbi Jose says: I was once travelling on the road, and I entered into one of the ruins of Jerusalem in order to pray. Eliyahu Ha'Navi, of blessed memory, appeared and waited for me at the door until I finished my prayer. After I finished my prayer, he said to me: Peace be with you, my master! and I replied: Peace be with you, my master and teacher! And he said to me: My son, why did you go into this ruin? I replied: To pray. He said to me: You ought to have prayed on the road. I replied: I feared that passers-by might interrupt me. He said to me: If that was the case, you should have said an abbreviated prayer. I therefore learned three things from Eliyahu Ha'Navi: One must not go into a ruin; one may say the prayer on the road; and if one does say his prayer on the road, he may recite an abbreviated form of the prayer. The Prophet Eliyahu further said to me: My son, what sound did you hear in this ruin? I replied: I heard a divine voice, cooing like a dove, and saying: Woe to the children, on account of whose sins I destroyed My house and burnt My temple and exiled them among the nations of the world! And the Prophet Eliyahu further said to me: By your life and by your head! Not in this moment alone does G-d so exclaim, but three times each day does G-d exclaim like that! And more than that, whenever Jews go into the synagogues and schoolhouses and respond: May His great name be blessed! the Holy One, blessed be He, shakes His head and says: Happy is the King who is thus praised in this house! Woe to the Father who had to banish his children, and woe to the children who had to be banished from the table of their Father!

תלמוד בבלי מסכת ברכות דף ג' עמ'
א'—תניא, אמר רבי יוסי: פעם אחת הייתי
מהלך בדרך, ונכנסתי לחורבה אחת
מהורבות ירושלים להתפלל. בא אליהו
זכור לטוב ושמר לי על הפתח (והמתין
לי) עד שסיימתי תפילתי. לאחר שסיימתי
תפילתי אמר לי: שלום עליך, רבי!
ואמרתי לו: שלום עליך, רבי ומורי! ואמר
לי: בני, מפני מה נכנסת לחורבה זו?
אמרתי לו: להתפלל. ואמר לי: היה לך
להתפלל בדרך! ואמרתי לו: מתירא
הייתי שמא יפסיקו בי עוברי דרכים.
ואמר לי: היה לך להתפלל תפלה קצרה.
באותה שעה למדתי ממנו שלשה דברים:
למדתי שאין נכנסין לחורבה, ולמדתי
שמתפללין בדרך, ולמדתי שהמתפלל
בדרך – מתפלל תפלה קצרה. ואמר לי:
בני, מה קול שמעת בחורבה זו? ואמרתי
לו: שמעתי בת קול שמנהמת כיונה
ואומרת: אוי לבנים שבעוונותיהם
החרבתי את ביתי ושרפתי את היכלי
והגליתים לבין האומות. ואמר לי: הייך
וחיי ראשך, לא שעה זו בלבד אומרת כך,
אלא בכל יום ויום שלש פעמים אומרת
כך; ולא זו בלבד, אלא בשעה שישאל
נכנסין לבתי כנסיות ולבתי מדרשות
ועונין יהא שמיה הגדול מבורך, הקדוש
ברוך הוא מנענע ראשו ואומר: אשרי
המלך שמקלסין אותו בביתו כך, מה לו
לאב שהגלה את בניו, ואוי להם לבנים
שגלו מעל שולחן אביהם.

This source relates that a mystical reaction takes place when Kaddish is recited within a group of ten Jews-G-d remembers that despite the unfortunate moment when His residence on Earth-the Holy Temple was destroyed and the People of Israel were exiled from their homeland, the Jewish People continue to pray that G-d be recognized by all mankind as G-d on this world.

Early Examples Of Circumstances When Kaddish Was Recited

Rabba said: And the curse of each day is severer than that of the preceding day, as it is stated: In the morning you shall say: If only it were possible that G-d advance the time so that it be evening! And at evening you shall say: If only it were possible that G-d advance the time so that it be morning. Which morning are they longing for? If you say it is the morning of tomorrow, does anyone know that it will not present an even more difficult circumstance? Therefore it must be that they were longing for the morning of the day before. In that case, why does G-d allow the world to endure? Because of the recital of the words of Kedushah and their Aramaic translation at the end of the prayer service and the Kaddish that is recited after the Scriptural reading, and the response of "May His great Name be blessed" which is uttered in the Kaddish after studying Midrash; as it is stated: A land of thick darkness, as darkness itself, a land of the shadow of death, without any order. Hence if there are Scriptural readings, the readings bring light to the thick darkness.

The words of the Kedusha found in the prayer of OOVah L'Tzion. That prayer was authored so that Jews would learn at least some Torah each day during the prayer service by reciting the words of Kedusha and their Aramaic translation. The words of Kedushah were translated into Aramaic so that both learned and unlearned people could understand the verses. By reading the Hebrew and Aramaic translations, individuals fulfill two requirements: sanctifying G-d's name and studying Torah, both of which are dear to G-d. In a similar manner, we recite the words Y'Hai Shmei Rabbah M'Vorach after hearing a talk on Aggaditah that a teacher customarily teaches publicly on Shabbat. People would congregate in synagogues in order to hear words of Torah because it was not a work day. By listening to words of Torah and then answering Y'Hai Shmai Rabbah, the congregants fulfilled the obligation of sanctifying G-d's name and learning Torah.

תלמוד בבלי מסכת סוטה דף מט' עמ'
א' – אמר רבא: בכל יום ויום מרובה
קללתו משל חבירו, שנאמר: (דברים
כה) בבקר תאמר מי יתן ערב, ובערב
תאמר מי יתן בקר; הי בקר? אילימא
בקר דלמהר, מי ידע מאי הוי? אלא
דהליף. ואלא עלמא אמאי קא מקיים?
אקדושה דסידרא ואיהא שמיה רבא
דאגדתא, שנא': (איוב י') ארץ עפתה
כמו אופל עלמות ולא סדרים, הא יש
סדרים – תופיע מאופל.

רש"י – תלמוד בבלי מסכת סוטה דף
מט' עמ' א' – אקדושה דסידרא סדר
קדושה, שלא תקונה אלא שיהו כל
ישראל עוסקין בתורה בכל יום דבר
מועט שאומר קריאתו ותרנומו והן
כעוסקין בתורה; וכיון שנוהג בכל
ישראל בתלמידים ובעמי הארץ. ויש
כאן שתיים: קדושת השם ותלמוד
התורה, חביב הוא. וכן יהא שמיה רבה
מברך שעונין אחר הגדה שהדרשן
דורש ברבים בכל שבת היו נוהגין כך,
ושם היו נקבצין כל העם לשמוע לפי
שאינו יום של מלאכה, ויש כאן תורה
וקידוש השם.

Why Kaddish Is Recited During The Prayer Service

Concerning the origin of Kaddish that you asked, we can not trace the practice to a clear and definitive source found among our ancestors' writings. However, those who followed them based their recitation of Kaddish upon this verse (Leviticus 22, 32) And I will be sanctified within the people of Israel and upon what our Rabbinic leaders extrapolated from the verse: that any prayer which results in the sanctification of the name of G-d must be recited only in a group of ten men. From these teachings we can conclude that when ten men congregate to perform a mitzvah, whether it be for prayer or for the study of Torah, they must recite a prayer in which they sanctify the name of G-d. As a result, at the conclusion of the first section of the morning prayer, Pseukei D'Zimra, after reciting the Bracha in Yishtabach, those congregated should recite Kaddish because they have completed the mitzvah of reciting Pseukei D'Zimra and they are about to perform an additional Mitzvah, the recital of Kriyat Shma and its blessings before and after . . . And they should recite Kaddish after Shmona Esrei because it too is an independent Mitzvah and it is not connected with that which is recited after it. And another Kaddish should be recited after the Torah Reading because in order to read from the Torah, ten men must congregate together. And another Kaddish after reciting the Kedusha in OO"Vah LTzion because it too is a Mitzvah unto itself and it is a Prayer of Sanctification of G-d's name and requires the presence of ten men.

תשובות הגאונים החדשות – עמנואל (אופק) סימן לה' – תשנה – תשס. ועל מעשה הקדיש אשר שאלת לא נמצא בידינו עליו דבר מבורר היטב מן הראשונים, אך סמכוהו האחרונים על הפסוק הזה (ויקרא כב', לב') ונקדשתי בתוך בני ישראל; ועל מה שאמרו רבותינו במדרשו (ברכות כא', ב') כל דבר שבקדושה לא יהא פחות מעשרה. מן הדברים הללו יוצא להם שאם נתקבצו עשרה בני אדם לדבר מצוה בין בתפלה בין בתלמוד תורה צריכין לקדש. לכך אחר פסוקי הזמרה וסמוך לברוך הבוחר בשיר ובזמרה חי העולמים יקדישו פעם אחת, לפי שכבר סיימו את המצוה של פסוקי הזמרה ועכשו יתחיל באהרת שהיא ק"ש בברכותיה לפנייה ולאחריה . . . וקדיש יאמרו אחר כל סיום י"ת, שגם היא מצוה בפני עצמה ואינה מתחברת עם מה שיאמר אחריה. וקדיש אחר יאמרו אחר ספר תורה, מפני שקריאת התורה בציבור בעשרה. וקדיש אחר סדר קדושה, מפני שהוא גם הוא מצוה בפני עצמה והוא דבר שבקדושה ולא יפחות מעשרה.

Why Kaddish Is Recited At A Funeral And Not At A Wedding

The prayer "Tzadok Hadin" that is recited at a burial is a Mitzvah that is the responsibility of the community to perform, as it is written in Tractate Megilah, page 3, side 2, that one must take time away from studying Torah to accompany the casket to the cemetery and to accompany a bride to her wedding, and it is therefore necessary to recite Kaddish at the burial. A minority of Gaonim hold that one should not recite Kaddish at a burial simply because Tzodak Hadin has been said. Instead, Kaddish should be recited only after a different Mitzvah was performed (i.e. learning Torah). Other Gaonim hold that the burial itself is the Mitzvah that triggers the recitation of Kaddish. Now, this line of reasoning may prompt you to be troubled by the following question: why is not also our custom to recite Kaddish at a wedding? Is not the performance of a wedding the type of Mitzvah that requires the presence of ten men? It is not appropriate to recite Kaddish at a wedding because the congregation is coming only to honor the couple; they do not say a word nor perform any act, so for what reason should those present recite Kaddish? Kaddish is not recited unless those present have said some words that are part of a Mitzvah or consist of words of praise.

תשובות הגאונים החדשות – עמנואל סימן לה' – תשנה – תשס. וצדוק הדין מצוה שחייבין הצבור כדאמרי' (מגילה ג', ב') מבטלין תלמוד תורה להוצאת המת ולהכנסת כלה, וצריכין לקדש עליה. ומקצת הגאונים אמרו שאין ראוי לומר קדיש אחר צדוק הדין עד שיאמרו הקדיש אלא על דבר שהוא מענין המצוה. וגאונים אחרים אמרו שאין שם הפסקה שהקבורה מן המצוה היא. ואם יש את נפשך לומר למה לא יאמרו קדיש בהכנסת כלה לחופה שהיא מצוה והיא בעשרה? אי אפשר לומר כן, שהרי הצבור אינם באים אלא לכבוד בעלמא ואינם אומרים מאומה ועל מה יקדשו, שהרי אין הקדוש בלא שום אמירה של מצוה או של שבת.

Talmudic Source That Led To The Establishment Of The Mourner's Kaddish

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.

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

An Incident Involving Rabbi Akiva - 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: Yihai 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 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 Birchat 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.

מעשה ברבי עקיבא - An Incident Involving Rabbi Akiva

מחזור ויטרי סימן קמד-הא לך סדר מוצאי שבתות: נמצא בספריי הפנימי. ת: מעשה בר' עקיבא שהיה מהלך בבית הקברות בדרך, ופגע באדם אחד שהיה ערום ושחור כפחם והיה טעון משאוי גדול של קוצים על ראשו. כסבור עליו ר' עקיבא שהוא חי והיה רץ כסוס. גזר עליו ר' עקיבא והעמידו. אמר לו: מה לאותו האיש לעשות עבודה קשה כזאת. אם עבד אתה ואדונך עושה לך כך, אני אפדה אותך מידו. ואם עני עתה ובני אדם באים עליך בעקיפין, אני מעשיר אותך. אמר לו: בבקשה ממך אל תעכביני שמא ירגזו בי הממונין עלי. אמר לו: מה זו ומה מעשיך. אמר לו: אותו האיש מת. ובכל יום שולחים אותי להטוב עצים. אמר לו: בני מה היה מלאכתך בעולם שבאתה ממנו. אמר לו גבאי המכס הייתי. והייתי נושא פנים לעשירים והורג את העניים. אמר לו כלום שמעת מאותם הממונין עליך לפורענות איזו דבר שיש לו תקנה. אמר: בבקשה ממך אל תעכביני שמא ירגזו עלי בעלי פורענות שאותו האיש אין לו תקנה. אלא שמעתי מהם דבר שלא היה יכול להיות. שאלמלא היה לו לעני זה בן שהוא עומד בקהל ואומר ברכו את ה' המבורך והם עונין אחריו. ויהא שמיה רבה מברך מיד מתירין אותו מן הפורענות. ואותו האיש לא היה לו בן מעולם. והניח את אשתו מעוברת. ואיני יודע אם ילדה זכר. ואם ילדה זכר מי מלמדו תורה שאין לאותו האיש אוהב מעולם. מיד קיבל עליו ר' עקיבא לילך לחפש אם הוליד לו בן זכר כדי ללמדו תורה ויעמידנו לפני הציבור. אמר לו מה שמך. אמר לו עקיבא. ושם אשתך. אמר לו שושניבא. ושם עירך לודקיא. מיד נצטער ר' עקיבא צער גדול והלך ושאל עליו. כיון שבא לאותו מקום שאל עליו. אמרו לו ישחקו עצמותיו של אותו האיש. שאל על אשתו. אמרו לו ימחה זכרה מן העולם. שאל על בנו. אמרו לו הרי ערל הוא. אפילו מצות מילה לא עיסקנו בו. מיד מלו ר' עקיבא. והושיבו בספר לפניו ולא היה מקבל התורה עד שישב מ' יום בתענית. יצתה בת קול ואמרה לו לזה אתה מתענה. אמר לפניו רבונו של עולם והלא לפניך ערכתי אותו. מיד פתח הק' את לבו ולמדו תורה, וק"ש וברכת המזון. והעמידו לפני הקהל ואומר ברכו. והם ענו אחריו ברוך ה' המבורך. באותה שעה התירו אותו מן הפורענות. מיד בא אותו האיש לר' עקיבא בחלום. ואמר יהי רצון מלפניך הקב"ה שתנוח דעתך בגן עדן שהצללת אותי מדינה של גהינם. מיד פתח ר' עקיבא ואמר (תהלים קלה) ה' שמך לעולם ה' זכרך לדור ודור. ועל בן נהגו לעבור לפני התיבה במוצאי שבת אדם שאין לו אב או אם לומר ברכו או קדיש.

Early Reference To Kaddish Being Recited By A Minor

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.

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.

BIOGRAPHY OF RASHI

Rashi, Rabbi Shlomo Yitzchaki (Rabbi Solomon ben Isaac, Isaacides) was born in Troyes, in northern France in 1040 and died in Worms in 1105. He studied in the academies (yeshivot) of Troyes, Mainz, and Worms. His teachers, Rabbi Jacob ben Yakar and Rabbi Isaac ben Judah, were students of Rabbenu Gershom, Me'or Ha-Golah. In 1070, Rashi returned to Troyes and founded a yeshiva there, which was attended by students from far and near. (Bar Ilan Digital Library)

Early Reference To Kaddish Being Recited By A Minor

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 Elohav V'Anachnu Nalaich B'Shem Hashem Alokainu L'Olam Va'ed. And the minor stands and recites 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'Olmait 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 Titkabel. 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.

מחזור 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' אלהינו
לעולם ועד: ועומד הנער ואומר קדיש
ומדלג תתקבל ואומר יהא שלמא
רבה. שכשהציבור אומר פסוק או
משנה צריכין לומר קדיש אחריהם;

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
ואומר: כולם: פיטום הקטרת...יעמוד
הנער ואומר קדיש בלא תתקבל. וקדיש
זה אינו אלא להנך את התינוקות. ואינו
בכלל שבע ביום הללתיך.

BIOGRAPHY OF THE COMPOSER OF THE MACHZOR VITRY

Rabbi Simbah of Vitry (12th century), a student of Rashi. Machzor Vitry contains liturgical comments and decisions, as well as many piyyutim. (Bar Ilan Digital Library)

Earliest Reference To Kaddish Being Recited By A Mourner

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.

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.

BIOGRAPHY OF THE OUR ZARUAH

Rabbi Yitzchok ben Rabbi Moshe of Vienna was born ca. 1180 and died ca. 1250. He was a student of Ra'avyah and other Tosafists in Ashkenaz and was the teacher of Maharam of Rothenburg and other Tosafists. He is best known for his Or Zarua, one of the most important halachic compendia containing the decisions of Ashkenazic Rishonim. (Bar Ilan Digital Library)

How A Prayer Intended For Children Became An Adult's Prayer

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 Tanhuma 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.

ואחר ספר מטה משה-סימן רי"ג-
עלינו אמר קדיש. ונמצא במדרשות
שיש לבן לומר ברכו ולהתפלל בעיבור
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.

BIOGRAPHY OF THE AUTHOR OF THE MATEH MOSHE

Rabbi Moshe ben Avraham of Przemyśl (died 1606), a student of Rabbi Shlomo Luri

UNDERSTANDING KADDISH YASOM

A Tshuva by Rabbi Shlomo Chaim Hacohen Aviner

Rabbi Shlomo Chaim Hacohen 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.

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.