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KADDISH•PUBLIC AND PRIVATE

Posted by Daniel in Prayer on Jan 2, 2013

Dear Friends,

In the fall of 2004, I had the great joy of learning together with eight rabbinical and rabbinic pastor students. We studied comparative *nuscha'ot*, the different ways in which the same prayers were formulated in the liturgical traditions of various Jewish communities. In the course of that study, we came upon a *kaddish* in the *siddur* of Rav Amram Ga'on meant for recitation by individuals. This caught us all by pleasant surprise, since we had all been taught that *kaddish*, being a call and response, could only be recited in a *minyan* and that there were no equivalents for private prayer.

The custom of having mourners recite the *kaddish* had not yet been established when Rav Amram lived, much less the idea of setting aside or creating opportunities for a *kaddish* identified as specifically for mourners. At the same time, today we are all aware that people who, for various reasons, cannot be part of a *minyan* but still want to honour the relative or friend who passed away by reciting a *kaddish* even when alone. So this *kaddish* of Rav Amram's, available in all the places where a regular *kaddish* appears, offered a wonderful opportunity to create what so many needed while still respecting the tradition of leaving a call and response for when there is a *minyan*.

(Each unit of the *kaddish* ends with the recitor saying, "And say ye: Amen" to which we respond with "Amen.")

Each student worked with this text independently and then, with assistance from Reb Ruth Gan Kagan and input from Reb Hanna Tiferet and Reb Zalman, I arrived at a composite version which reflected both the thoughts of the students and our needs as a community committed to Jewish spiritual renewal. We hope that you will find it useful where a *minyan* is not or cannot be present and yet people desire to say *kaddish*.

The link below will take you to a series of pages formatted for *Siddur Kol Koreh*. First you will find the original version from Rav Amram's *siddur*, with a gender specific translation (on purpose) to make the contrast with our newer version clearer. It is only translated, since it is not intended for inclusion in a *siddur* in this original form. It is followed by the new version formatted both for the transliterated and Hebrew/English versions of *Siddur Kol Koreh*.

I think that there is still room for further refinements to this new *Kaddish L'Yachid* and welcome your comments and suggestions.

Finally, last month Reb Zalman prepared a new translation of the *kaddish* which we now call the Mourners *Kaddish*. You will see that it is a call and response and so follows the tradition of being said in a community. Both Reb Chaya Gusfield and I made a few adjustments to which Reb Zalman agreed. I also spoke with him about adding it to *Kol Koreh*, which I am now doing in at least some of the places where there is a mourners *kaddish*.

Kaddish Versions•Kol Koreh

With thanks to the Holy Blessed One and the *Sh'chinnah* for this privilege, I offer it to you with continuing thanks to the students who contributed: Ed Stafman, Robert Saunders, Ellen Weaver, Jan Salzman, Chaya Gusfield, Lori Klein, Eli Cohen, Rachel Leah Feinberg.

With blessings for a good secular new year and prayers that this is the moment when we truly begin to face the real issues of our time by letting go of war and greed and replacing them with praise of the Holy One and concern for all humanity.

Daniel

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ONE COMMENT

POSTED BY RABBI RACHEL BARENBLAT

I'm so glad you've shared this online. It's a beautiful prayer and very valuable — in my community here it's sparked some wonderful conversations about kaddish and minyan.

Jan 3, 2013

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