

should always" there already appears the heading "Psalms for weekdays";²⁰ and we have already noted above (§11) that "Blessed is He Who spoke" is attached directly to the conclusion of the preceding passage *בשובי את שבותיכם*, "When I restore your exile . . ."

(8) To summarize this exposition, we may conclude that the first part of the Morning Service is essentially composed of the following subsections: (1) various benedictions derived from *B. Ber.* 60b; (2) material for study and introductory benedictions deriving from *B. Ber.* 11b; (3) a prayer for messianic redemption derived from *Tana deve eliyahu*, chapter 19. Later these three sections were no longer understood in their original order; extraneous prayers were inserted in them, to the point that in Ashkenaz they became so mixed up that they no longer made any sense. We do not know when they were assembled; there is no doubt that the entire section did not originally belong to the public liturgy, but belonged to private devotion. It did not find a place in the synagogue before the ninth century, and long thereafter it was still not universally accepted everywhere.²¹

[72] § 12a *Kaddish*

(1) As is clear from its being so frequently mentioned, *Kaddish* serves as a conclusion to the entire service, or the main sections of the service, and the Torah reading; it is also recited by mourners at the end of the service. But its liturgical use does not correspond to its original meaning; this has led to its reinterpretation and to the expansion of its text. But the original text has undergone considerable expansion for other reasons as well.

(2) The nucleus of the *Kaddish* is the blessing, *יהא שמה רבא מברך לעלם ולעלמי עלמיא*, "May His great name be blessed forever and ever," in which can be heard clearly the echo of *Dan.* 2:20; the Hebrew equivalent is found in *Ps.* 113:2 and in the blessing that was customary in the Temple: *ברוך שם כבוד מלכותו לעולם ועד*, "Blessed be the name of His majestic glory forever." All of the references to *Kaddish* in talmudic literature relate to this sentence, to which they attribute extreme importance. "May His great Name be blessed" is, to the rabbis of the Talmud, the hymn of hymns. The first tana to mention this verse is *R. Yose b. Halafta* (ca. 150) in *Sifre Deut.*, 132b, §306, and *B. Ber.* 3a; while among the amoraim, *Rava* designates "May the great Name" of the *Aggadah* as one of the things upon which the world stands (*B. Soṭa* 49a).¹ Now what we find in *Rava's* language as a unified concept points to the origin of this prayer; it was originally used at the end of sermons on *Aggadah* (§29).² The rule was that every sermon had to conclude with words of consolation—that is, with references to the messianic age—and some preachers added another short prayer to these eschatological conclusions. This prayer may at first have had no fixed formula, but was freely worded by the preacher. One such prayer that became established in the course of time was the *Kaddish*. Its first sentence contains the two eschatological petitions for the sanctification of the name of God and for the coming of the kingdom of God. To these petitions belongs the blessing "May His great name be blessed," or, in its Hebrew

formulation, *יהא שמה רבא מברך* (B. Ber. 3a). The connection with Ezek. 36–38 and especially with the wording of 28:23 is obvious. This is the core and the original meaning of Kaddish.

We do not know when the petitions were composed, but the very simple form of their eschatology, their simple wording, and their lack of any allusion to the destruction of the Temple are signs of their antiquity. Besides, their similarity to the Christian Lord's Prayer is well known;³ the first three petitions of the latter in Matthew (6:9–10) fully parallel the first sentence of the Kaddish. It follows from all of these considerations that the nucleus of Kaddish is very ancient. It appears that besides these petitions and the blessing, the Aramaic clause *לעלא מן כל ברכתא*, "above all blessings . . .,"⁴ also belongs to the first stratum, because it contains a clear reference to the aggadic sermon and its eschatological conclusion (*בנחמתא*). The connection with the Aggadah also explains the Aramaic language of Kaddish, for this was the language spoken by the sages. Kaddish was not composed in the dialect of the common people but in the artificial dialect used in the house of study,⁵ and familiar from the officially recognized Targums (§28). Just as the Targum tradition was transplanted from Palestine to Babylonia, so the Kaddish, which originated in Palestine, was preserved and developed thanks to Babylonia, where it also achieved recognition as one of the "pillars of the world."

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(3) As a liturgical prayer we find Kaddish first in a Palestinian source, Tractate *Soferim*, composed around 600; there it comes at the end of the Torah reading (21:6) in connection with "Bless the Lord" (10:8), and at the conclusion of the service (19:1). Later in Amram the usage is identical with that customary today. For these liturgical purposes the Kaddish was expanded. At its end a petition was appended for the acceptance of the prayer: *תתקבל צלותהון וגו'*, "May their prayer be accepted . . .," while before "Bless the Lord" (§7), before the Kedushah of the Lesson (§10), and after the reading of the Torah (§25) in the Morning Service, as well as before the *Amida* in the other services, the ancient form of Kaddish without "May their prayer" remained in use.⁶ But the first part too sustained two additions: The Aramaic blessing "May His great Name" was supplemented by a Hebrew paraphrase of the same idea; and after each petition an invitation to the congregation, *ואמרו אמן*, "and say Amen," was added. We also find Kaddish connected with the week of mourning already in *Soferim*. There it says that after the Additional Service of the Sabbath, the mourners are visited at home, a benediction is recited, and then Kaddish is recited (19:12).⁷ It is quite likely that on such occasions the blessing formula *יהא שלמא רבא*, "May great peace . . .," was added to the existing Kaddish. We have no information as to when or why the same idea was later added again in Hebrew in the words *עושה שלום במרומי*, "He Who makes peace in the heavens" (compare Job 25:2). When a scholar died, the beginning of Kaddish would be expanded with the words *בעלמא דעתיד לאתחרתא*, "In the world that will one day be renewed," but later this formula came to be used only at funerals [and also in the Kaddish after the conclusion of the study of a tractate; in Maimonides and Yemen it is used in every rabbinical Kaddish]. But the sentences that conclude the mourner's Kaddish, "May great peace . . ." and "He Who makes peace" were appended also to the liturgical Kaddish and remain unchanged whenever it is recited.

(4) The reason that Kaddish is used in the liturgy is the blessing that it contains

and the fact that the words *ברכתא שירתא תשבחתא*, "Blessings, songs, and praises," were understood as referring to the prayers. It was considered to be appropriate for mourning ceremonies because of the eschatological petition at its beginning; the sanctification of the name of God and the coming of God's kingdom are intimately connected, especially in the prophet Ezekiel, with resurrection; and doubtless the word *consolations* was understood as relating to the comforting of mourners. To these real connections was added the mystical conception that the recitation of Kaddish has magic powers over the living and the dead (compare *B. Shab.* 119b and *Tana deve eliyahu*, chap. 20), and even the response "Amen" after the Kaddish was supposed to have power to influence the divine decree. To this was added the idea that sons are obliged to act in behalf of the welfare of their parents' souls. This can be accomplished through participation in public worship and the reciting of certain prayers in the presence of the congregation, and according to the mystical legend of R. Akiva,⁸ especially through the reciting of certain hymnic prayers like Kaddish and "Bless the Lord." Now these traditions have to do only with the liturgical Kaddish, but out of it the custom gradually arose that sons recite Kaddish for a full year after the death of their parents.⁹ This custom originated in Germany during the great persecutions. It is still completely foreign to Vitry, and R. Eleazar of Worms (ca. 1200) still expresses himself very cautiously about it. But R. Isaac Or Zarua¹⁰ (1220) already relates that in Bohemia and in the Rhineland the orphans recite Kaddish at the end of the service, while in France no care is given as to who recites it. He decries this indifference, pointing to the version of the legend according to which R. Akiva saved a father who had been sentenced to punishment in Gehenna by teaching his son Kaddish and having him say it in the synagogue. Two centuries later we find for the first time in the writing of R. Jacob Möllin the concept of *Jahrzeit* (Memorial Day),¹¹ the commemoration of the anniversary of the parents' death by the reciting of Kaddish. The custom of reciting Kaddish during the year of mourning and on the anniversary of the death was gradually adopted, together with its German/Yiddish designation by world Jewry. None of the early law codes, including the *Shulhan 'arukh*, knows of any binding precepts in connection with it; but what religious law left optional, religious feeling made sacred, and the Mourner's Kaddish became one of the most widespread and faithfully observed religious institutions.¹² Protests against the conception of Kaddish as a means of salvation have been raised continually.

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(5) Out of the various usages three types of Kaddish have developed: Complete Kaddish (*קדיש שלם*, *קדיש גמור*, or *קדיש בתרא*) is the one that includes *תתקבל צלותהוּן*, "May the prayer be accepted," together with *יהא שלמא רבא*, "May great peace"—that is, the Kaddish at the end of the service; Half-Kaddish (*קדיש חסר*, *חצי קדיש*, and *קדיש זוטא*), which goes only up to the words *דאמירין בעלמא*, ". . . which are said in the world"; and Mourner's Kaddish (*קדיש אבל* or *קדיש יתום*), which is the whole Kaddish minus the sentence "May their prayer be accepted," said following the conclusion of the service after such later additions as "It is our duty." A particular type of this Kaddish [which is in fact the Kaddish in its original function] is called Rabbinical Kaddish (*קדיש דרבנן*); it is recited by mourners after a Talmud lesson, and it is formed by the insertion of the paragraph beginning *על ישראל . . .*, "For Israel . . ." before "May great peace." This addition, too, is no older than the closing of the Talmud.¹³ Because the Kaddish came to be used in

the synagogue liturgy, congregational responses were added to it. [It appears that the congregational response is actually an integral part of the Kaddish following the public homily.] According to *Sifre*, 132b, §306, the manner of the prayer's recitation is that after the words "May His great name be blessed" the congregation should respond "forever and ever"; but later this custom fell into disuse, and instead the congregation would repeat the entire sentence. Already in the Talmud the mystics attributed extraordinary powers to this response. In later centuries its prestige increased to the point that substitute prayers were devised for each service for the sake of people who were unable to attend the public service and who therefore could not hear the Kaddish, which could be recited only in the presence of a quorum;¹⁴ in these versions the sentence "May the great name" was cunningly inserted by the authors. To this was added the repeated response of "amen" by the congregation. It was not said everywhere in the same places, and this is [perhaps] evidence that it is a late custom.

(6) The full text of Kaddish first appears in Amram. It goes without saying that the text of a prayer so much in use undergoes considerable variation over the course of time, but it must be noted that the first half of the text, the part known as the Half-Kaddish, shows fewer variants than the second half; this, too, shows that the second half is a later addition. The text of Amram is preserved almost without variants in Ashkenaz and Rome, while the other rites have many. These variants have been carefully collected, sentence by sentence, by de Sola Pool; we shall mention only those that have general significance. The messianic petition at the beginning was further developed in Sepharad, Romaniot, and Yemen, and in its fullest version reads, *ויצמח פורקניה [וישכלל] והיכליה [ויקרב משיחיה]*, "and may He make His salvation flourish [and rebuild His Temple] and bring near His messiah." The words in brackets are sometimes lacking in one rite or another; the variety in the wordings of the text (Pool, *Kaddish*, 26-38) proves [perhaps] that these sentences are late additions. Similarly, *יתברך*, "May it be blessed," itself a development of the preceding blessing, has seen changes in the word order and a slight increase in the synonymous verbs, which are abundant to begin with (Pool, *Kaddish*, 54);¹⁵ the same goes for *תתקבל*, "May the prayer" (Pool, *Kaddish*, 65f.). The additions to the two final petitions are, however, more numerous, because of decorative and expansive elaborations (Pool, *Kaddish*, 69f., 75f.); in Sepharad and Romaniot many other favors are requested, mostly in Hebrew, besides "life." In a text dominated by Aramaic, this fact alone would show that this is a late addition. The variations in *על ישראל*, "For Israel," (Pool, *Kaddish*, 89) are few in number and importance. *על ישראל ועל צדיקיה*, "For Israel and for the righteous," taken from the prayer for the soul of the dead called *השכנה* in Sepharad, may be considered a variant to it; in Reform prayer books¹⁶ it is inserted in the text of the Mourner's Kaddish, because this provides a direct link with the dead, which is lacking in the traditional text.

(7) Alongside the variants, the expansions of Kaddish must be mentioned. At the beginning, in the petition for the speedy bringing of the kingdom of God "in the lifetime of all Israel," holders of high offices were specially named. In an ancient report of the installation of a Babylonian exilarch¹⁷ it is said that during the formal prayer-service the formula was inserted into the Kaddish *בחי נשיאנו ראש גלות ובהייכון ובהיי דכל בית ישראל*, "in the life of our prince, the exilarch, and in your life and in the life of all the

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house of Israel." In the Cairo geniza, fragments have been found indicating that this custom was followed regularly, and that in every recitation of Kaddish the name of the exilarch together with those of the heads of the great academies in Babylonia and Palestine were mentioned. One source reads *בחי נשיאנו ראש הגולה ובחיי ראש הישיבה של גולה ובחייכון* . . . , "in the life of our prince the exilarch and in the life of the head of the academy of the Diaspora and in your life . . ." and another, *בחי ארוננו אביתר הכהן ראש ישיבת גאון יעקב* . . . , "in the life of our master Abiathar the Priest, Head of the Academy of the Splendor of Jacob, and in the life of Solomon the Priest, Father of the Academy, and in the life of R. Šadok, the Third in the Fellowship. . . ." This custom did not end in the eleventh century, for a century later we are told that the communities of Yemen would show their reverence for Maimonides by naming him in the Kaddish: . . . *בחי רבנא משה בר מיימן* . . .¹⁸ Typical is the fact that this addition remained in Hebrew inside an Aramaic text. Incomparably more numerous are the additions at the end, most of them elaborations of the three final sentences, and most of them in Aramaic, interrupted occasionally by Hebrew words. Most of these additions¹⁹ have been preserved in the Cochin rite: (1) *תבני קרתא*, "May the city be rebuilt" (Pool, *Kaddish*, 108); (2) *תשלח אסותא*, "Send healing" (ibid., 13, n. 12); (3) *ייתן שמעין*, "May good tidings come" (ibid.); (4) *תענו ותעתי*, "May you be answered and responded to"; (5) *תכתבו כלכם*, "May you all be inscribed"; (6) a rhymed passage *יהי רצון*, "May it be Your will" after "May their prayer be accepted," and finally a verbose "May He Who makes peace" and *דכירין לטב*, "Remembered for good."

Also, in a few Sephardic communities, "May you be answered and responded to" is said at the end of festivals.

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B. OTHER WEEKDAY PRAYERS

§ 13 *The Afternoon Service*

(1) The name of the Afternoon Service, *תפלת מנחה* (*Tefilat minhā*) (M. Ber. 4:1), Aramaic *צלותא רמנחה*, points to the service's origin in the Afternoon Sacrifice. In connection with the service, as with the sacrifice, a distinction is made between "the great *minhā*," which begins at six and one-half hours, and "the lesser *minhā*," beginning at nine and one-half hours (compare M. Pes. 5:1; B. Ber. 26b). To derive this distinction from the Bible, one must think of *צהריים*, "noon" (Ps. 55:18) and *מנחת ערב*, "evening offering" (Ps. 141:2) as times of prayer. The usual time of this service in the Temple was the ninth hour (Acts 3:1: *ἡ ὅρα τῆς προσευχῆς ἡ ἐνάτη*). In some lands the great *minhā* was recited, and this is today the practice nearly everywhere on Sabbaths and festivals; in Rome and in the Orient it is often cited on weekdays, as well. But already in early times the Afternoon Service was moved, out of consideration for working conditions, to a point very close to the beginning of nighttime and joined with the Evening Service.¹ This was always the practice at the beginning of Sabbaths or festivals.