נב. מי שמת ולא הניח אחריו בנים זכרים, שיאמרו אחריו קדיש, כי אם בת, אין הבת יכולה לומר קדיש בבית הכנסת, ורק אם נאספים מנין בביתה, ללמוד תורה, או מזמורי תהלים, יכולה הבת לומר קדיש לאחר מכן. ואם אפשר נכון מאד לשכור אדם הגון בשכר, או שיקבל עליו בחנם לומר קדיש בבית הכנסת לעילוי נשמת הנפטר, ויאמר בפה מלא, אפילו פעם אחת בשנה, שכל הקדישים שיאמר השנה יהיו לעילוי נשמת פלוני בן פלונית שתהיה נפשו צרורה בצרור החיים. [חזו"ע שם עמ' שנז]

Day 4

A daughter reciting kaddish

52) Even if someone leaves behind no sons, his daughter may not recite kaddish for his soul in the synagogue. If a minyan gathers in her home for a Torah study session or to recite *Tehillim*, however, she may recite kaddish at the session's conclusion.

If she can, it is commendable for the daughter to hire someone to recite kaddish in the synagogue for the benefit of her father's soul. Alternatively, someone can volunteer to do this. Whoever takes upon himself to recite kaddish for someone other than his parent should say, at least one time during the year, that he is reciting kaddish each day for the benefit of the soul of so-and-so, in order that the soul will be elevated to a state of eternal life.[437]

unless an adult recites it along with them, and if a child recites it alone no one may respond Amen to him.

The responsa *Zekhor leYitzhak* Harari (#9) ruled that even if a child is over six years old, he may not recite kaddish by himself for the congregation. Harav Ephraim Laniado (responsa *Degel Mahane Efrayim O.H.* #1) disagreed, ruling that if the child is six years old or more, he may recite kaddish for the congregation. The *Hikre Lev* concurred with this lenient ruling. The responsa *Bet Yehuda* (Vol. I, #22) ruled that a child under bar mitzvah age may not recite a kaddish by himself if it is essential to the prayers [this means the seven basic renditions of kaddish, or twelve according to the Arizal, as explained above in halakha 1], but a six-or-seven-year-old child may recite any other kaddish by himself. This ruling was cited by Harav HIDA (*Mahazik Berakha*, *Kesher Godal*) and the *Kaf Hahayim* Sofer 55:19).

The *Kaf Hahayim* Sofer 55:20) ruled that if the orphan is not yet bar mitzvah, the cantor must recite kaddish and *Barekhu* along with him. Harav Menahem Azarya of Fano (#84) ruled likewise that the child cannot recite *Barekhu* by himself for the congregation. Maran the Rishon Letziyon cited all these *Poskim* in *Hazon Ovadya Avelut* (Vol. I, pages 354-356).

The *Or Letziyon*, however, asserted that in practice we may permit a six-or-seven-year-old child to recite kaddish and *Barekhu* for the congregation, just as we permit such a child to say *Barekhu* when he is called up to the Torah. Moreover, the *Shulhan Arukh* (282:3) ruled that we may count this child as one of the seven required people called up to read from the Torah, and if so he certainly should be able to recite kaddish. Maran the Rishon Letziyon, however, demonstrated that the *Poskim* did not concur with the *Or Letziyon's* position.

437. The *Shevut Yaakov* (Vol. II, #93) ruled that if someone passed away leaving no sons, his daughter may recite kaddish if ten men have assembled in her home [but not in the synagogue]. The *Teshuva Me'ahava* (#229:10) testified that the rabbinical leaders of Amsterdam did not protest a woman reciting kaddish when ten men assemble in her home. The author of *Havot Ya'ir* testified (responsa #222) that in at least one instance this practice was followed in Amsterdam. He commented that although he found no proof against this practice, and it is likely that the departed soul was pleased to hear his daughter sanctifying God's name in this way, we must still remain wary of people introducing new practices that our ancestors never adopted. This might lead to people bending the halakha and eventually even overlooking the halakha in various matters. Therefore, since this incident has become well-known and celebrated, we must take steps to prevent it from being repeated. The responsa *Kenesset Yehezkel* (*Y.D.* at the end) concurred with this, ruling that a daughter may not recite kaddish in the synagogue for her father's soul, and the daughter's son [grandson of the deceased] may not recite the kaddish, either.

The *Teshuva Me'ahava* admitted that there is a basis to permit the daughter to recite kaddish, since this is

נג. גר צדק שמתו אביו ואמו כשהם נכרים, רשאי לומר עליהם קדיש למנוחתם, שכיון שהם הביאוהו לעולם הזה, וגרמו לו שיזכה להסתפח בנחלת ה' ולהכיר בדת האמת, יש תועלת באמירת הקדיש עליהם למנוחתם, ולהקל מעליהם חומר הדין. [יחו"ד ח"ו סי' ס, חזו"ע אבלות ח"א עמ' שנט]

Kaddish for non-Jewish parents

53) Someone who converts to Judaism may recite kaddish to benefit the souls of his non-Jewish biological parents in appreciation for giving him life and for giving him the opportunity to grow spiritually and become a member of the Jewish nation. By reciting kaddish, the convert enables his parents' soul to rest comfortably, and it can lessen their suffering if they are being punished in the next world.[438]

considered a facet of the mitzvah to honor her parent. The reward for this mitzvah is long life, the Torah promises, and it would be unfair to say that only men may gain this reward while women may not. After all, both men and women are commanded to fulfill the mitzvah of honoring their parents. He testified that in Prague the old men and women used to gather in the women's gallery of the synagogue and sit there all morning reciting *Tehillim* until the afternoon. If there was someone who had passed away without sons, but who had daughters who were five or six years old, those daughters would recite kaddish when the old people completed the entire book of *Tehillim*. In the synagogue itself, however, this was never permitted. It would never be correct for a woman or a girl to enter the men's section of the synagogue.

Maran the Rishon Letziyon (*Hazon Ovadya Avelut* Vol. I, page 357) concurred with this. He cited the *Torah Lishmah* (#27) who insisted that we must never permit a woman to recite kaddish, since people might stretch this until they permit women to recite kaddish on behalf of the men during the prayers. Maran the Rishon Letziyon decided that, despite this, it is permissible for a woman to recite kaddish for a private minyan of men gathered in her home for a Torah-study session. We have no authority to forbid this even if we are afraid that people will learn from this that she may recite kaddish during the prayers in the synagogue.

For a grandparent

Maran the Rishon Letziyon (*Hazon Ovadya Avelut* Vol. I, footnote on page 357) stated that there is a mitzvah to recite kaddish on behalf of one's grandparent's soul, since the Talmud teaches (*Yevamot* 62b) that grandchildren are considered equal to children. In fact, the Rama ruled (gloss to *Y.D.* 240:24) that the mitzvah of honoring one's parents applies to honoring one's grandparents as well. Since the obligation of reciting kaddish is a facet of the mitzvah to honor one's parents, that obligation should apply to grandchildren as well. See the responsa of Rama (#118).

The *Kenesset Hagedola* (*Y.D. Siman* 403) stated: "The custom is to recite kaddish on behalf of one's grandparents. I personally instructed my sons to recite kaddish to benefit their grandmother's soul although their mother and I are still alive." The *Eliya Rabba* (132:9) likewise ruled that it is proper to recite kaddish on behalf of the soul of one's grandfather or grandmother.

Maran the Rishon Letziyon added that there is no obligation to recite kaddish to benefit one's wife's soul, citing Harav Menahem Azarya of Fano. Even so, the common custom is to recite it. The husband's kaddish is more beneficial to her soul than that of someone unrelated.

Kaddish for someone unrelated

Harav Yosef Colon (#44) that it is possible for someone to recite kaddish to benefit the soul of someone who is not at all related to him. He cited the responsa of Ra'anah (Vol. I, #77) ruling that if someone was hired to recite kaddish to benefit someone unrelated to him, and then his father passed away, he may continue reciting kaddish to benefit both his father and the other departed soul, as long as this is his intention while reciting the kaddish.

While traveling

The *Eliya Rabba* (133:9) cited the responsa *Binyamin Ze'ev* (#201) regarding someone who needed to travel overseas, and there would be no minyan available during his cruise. In this case, he should hire someone else to recite kaddish to benefit his father's soul during his trip.

The rabbi's kaddish

The responsa *Hayim Beyad* Palachi (#114) cited his grandfather, author of *Hikre Lev*, explaining that in many communities the rabbi recites the kaddish that precedes *Alenu Leshabe'ah*. The rabbi's kaddish benefits all those who passed away and have no sons to recite kaddish for their benefit.

438. Maran the Rishon Letziyon (responsa *Yehave Da'at* Vol. VI, #60) cited the Tosafot (*Sota* 10b) which pointed out that although the Talmud teaches (*Sanhedrin* 104a) that a son can grant spiritual credit to his father, but a father cannot grant spiritual credit to his son. Even

נד. בן מאומץ אף על פי שאינו חייב מן הדין לנהוג אבלות שבעה ושלשים על הוריו המאמצים, מצוה לומר קדיש לעילוי נשמת מאמציו, כי הוא חייב בכבודם בחייהם ובמותם, וטוב שיתאבל קצת עליהם, משום הכרת הטוב שגידלוהו והביאוהו עד הלום. [חזו"ע אבלות ח"א עמ' תקנא]

נה. העומד בפסוקי דזמרה, והצבור הגיעו לפני "עלינו לשבח", רשאי להפסיק לומר קדיש יתום שנאמר לפני עלינו לשבח, לעילוי נשמת אביו או אמו, דהוה ליה כשואל מפני הכבוד, וכמו שאמרו חז"ל (קדושין לא ע"ב): מכבדו בחייו ומכבדו במותו. ולכתחלה ההפסקה תהיה בין מזמור למזמור. [חזו"ע אבלות ח"א עמ' שסב]

Kaddish for adoptive parents

54) If someone was adopted as a child, he is not obligated to observe any of the halakhot of mourning when his adoptive parents pass away. Even so, it is only proper that he recite kaddish on behalf of their souls in gratitude for their kindness toward him over the years; the halakha obligates him to honor them during their lifetimes and afterward as if they are his real parents. It is commendable for him to observe some aspects of mourning over their deaths as well.

Kaddish during *Pesuke dezimra*

55) If the congregation has reached the kaddish preceding *Alenu Leshabe'ah* of *shaharit*, and the mourner is still in the middle of *Pesuke dezimra*, he may recite kaddish at that point to benefit the soul of his father or mother. Interrupting his prayers to recite kaddish is equal to interrupting in order to greet someone he is obligated to honor, which is permitted. In this case the son is obligated to honor his departed parent by reciting kaddish, since the mitzvah of honoring a parent includes reciting kaddish after the parent has passed away. If the mourner sees that this situation is about to materialize, he should try to schedule the interruption between two of the Psalms and not in the middle of a Psalm.

---

so, King David's prayers saved his son Avshalom from suffering in Gehinnom and raised him to bask in the splendor of the World to Come. A father's mitzvot will not give credit to his son and increase his reward, but the father's prayer can help to extract his son from Gehinnom and enable him to enter Gan Eden.

Maran the Rishon Letziyon reasoned that the same should apply to a convert regarding his biological parents. Although according to the halakha he is not at all related to them, it is befitting for him to offer prayers on their behalf in gratitude for their bringing him into the world. This is especially so if his parents supported his decision to convert and assisted him financially. His kaddish will be at least as effective as that of someone unrelated to the person for whom he recites it, as described in the previous footnote.