

The Kaddish Prayer

The words of the Kaddish are simple and are kabbalistically deep. The first sentence is

<i>Magnified and sanctified</i>	יְתַגַּדַּל וְיִתְקַדַּשׁ
<i>Be the great Divine Name</i>	שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא
<i>Throughout the universe that is created</i>	בְּעֻלְמָא דִּי בְרָא
<i>According to the Eternal Will.</i>	כְּרַעוּתָהּ

This verse simply declares that we believe in God who is great and Holy. We make the declaration because it is our obligation. For we who seek God are obligated to sanctify God's name. This is what it says on the surface.

Let us look deeper. Name is a code word for God's immanence. God's immanence is throughout the universe. It is this immanence which is our task to feel and reveal in the world. That is, it is this immanence which is to be magnified and sanctified and because it is to be magnified and sanctified we say:

*Magnified and sanctified be the great Divine Name
Throughout the universe*

Next we are reminded that the universe is created according to will. The Aramaic word כְּרַעוּתָהּ, literally means *according to His Will*. We have more neutrally translated it as *according to the Eternal Will*. Will is associated with the Sefirah כְּהָרַךְ. Since humankind is created in the image of God we have a parallel. As God's will creates the universe, so it is our will that sets up what happens in our personal world. How we want our personal world, so must we set our will.

<i>May the Kingdom be established</i>	וְיִמְלִיךְ מַלְכוּתָהּ בְּחַיֵּינוּ
<i>In our lifetime,</i>	
<i>And during our days,</i>	וּבְיוֹמֵינוּ
<i>And within the lifetime</i>	וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל
<i>Of the entire house of Israel,</i>	
<i>Even speedily and at a near time.</i>	בְּעֻזָּא וּבְזִמְן קָרִיב

As will is set, so does the kingdom become. Kingdom is associated with the Sefirah מְלָכוּת. So the end, Kingdom, comes from the beginning Will. This Kingdom is the Kingdom of God that we wish to establish in our lifetime. We want to be so able to set our will that the full Kingdom of God establishes itself in our lives, during our days. During our days means that we are fully conscious of its establishment. And not only this. But that by establishing the Kingdom of God within our lives, so may this Kingdom set such an example that the Kingdom of God may be established for all those in the household of Israel. Household of Israel is a code phrase for those who are seekers of God. In this way people will think: there is a Godly people, a people who give living evidence that God is sovereign in their lives. May this occur speedily and at a near time.

Next there comes the prayer that is the response to the declaration. The response is said aloud by all in the congregation.

יְהִי שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעַלְמֵי וְלְעַלְמֵי עַלְמֵיָא

*May the great Name be blessed forever and to all eternity.*¹

This prayer which is uttered in the world of speech, has its origins in the world of thought, and has its destination in the world of action. In the world of thought we must try to maintain a consciousness of

May the great Name be blessed forever and to all eternity.

And if we can maintain such a consciousness, then we will have our will set. Then our speech will be consistent with our will. Our actions will be consistent with our will. And all our actions will be actions which bless the great Name. Our lives will be lived in holiness. Each of our moments will be a moment of prayer. For this is the way that the great Name is blessed forever and to all eternity.

And when life is lived as prayer, when the holiness and Godliness of each person we encounter is revered, then we feel such an awe, such a reverence, such a wonder, that we can only make a blessing.

*Blessed and praised,
Glorified and raised,*

יְתַבְרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח
וְיִתְפָּאֵר וְיִתְרוֹמַם

¹ לְעַלְמֵי וְלְעַלְמֵי עַלְמֵיָא literally means: in (towards) the world and in (towards) the world of worlds.

*Exalted and honored,
Extolled and lauded,
Be the Holy Name.*

וַיִּתְנַשֵּׂא וַיִּתְהַדָּר
וַיִּתְעַלֶּה וַיִּתְהַלָּל
שְׁמֵהּ דְּקוּדְשָׁא

This blessing has four essential phrases, each one of which contains a verb-form whose direct meaning relates to raising or elevating.

The four phrases of this blessing come from the perspective of the four worlds: the world of emanating, the world of creating, the world of forming, and the world of making. Each phrase is a two word blessing or praising, the first one for the Sefirah **פְּתָר** and the second one for the Sefirah **מְלָכוּת**. In each world we start at the top and go to the bottom. In the world of emanating we say

Blessed and praised,

יְתַבְּרַךְ וַיִּשְׁתַּבַּח

The word **יְתַבְּרַךְ** comes from the root **בָּרַךְ**, which means *to bless*. The word **וַיִּשְׁתַּבַּח** comes from the root **שָׁבַח** meaning to *praise, improve, be raised in value, or increase in value*. That which is nearest to God is the blessing which comes from God. This is the bestowal of God's benevolence whose effect is to increase in value and improve the receiver of the benevolence. To praise someone is to elevate, for by praising we recognize and show appreciation for their essential worth. And this motivates the one being praised to want to do even better.

In the world of creating we say

Glorified and raised,

וַיִּתְפָּאֵר וַיִּתְרוֹמֵם

The word **וַיִּתְפָּאֵר** comes from the root **פָּאֵר**, meaning to *adorn, beautify, decorate, ornament, embellish, praise, or glorify*. The word **וַיִּתְרוֹמֵם** comes from the root **רָמַם**, meaning to *rise or be exalted*. That which is created is created for the purpose of beautifying the King and it does that by spiritually rising.

In the world of forming we say

Exalted and honored,

וַיִּתְנַשֵּׂא וַיִּתְהַדָּר

The word **וַיִּתְנַשֵּׂא** comes from the root **נָשָׂא**, meaning to *carry, bear, lift, raise, or to transfer*. Here we translate it as exalted because to exalt means to *raise high or elevate, or to raise in rank, power, or character*. The word **וַיִּתְהַדָּר** comes from the root **הָדָר**, meaning to *honor, adorn, esteem, respect*

or *show deference*. In Aramaic it means to *return* or *go round*. That which is being formed or formatted is pressed down into physical existence for the purpose of being raised high and thereby honor the King. Going down and then being raised up is to return and go around.

In the world of making we say

Extolled and lauded,

וַיִּתְעַלָּה וַיִּתְהַלַּל

The word וַיִּתְעַלָּה comes from the root עלה, meaning to *go up, ascend, climb, mount*, or to *grow* or *flourish*. It is translated here as extolled because to extol means to *praise highly* or *glorify*. The word extol comes from the latin extollo which means to *lift out, lift up, raise, or elevate*. And raising by speaking means to *extol, laud, or praise*. The word וַיִּתְהַלַּל comes from the root הלל, meaning to *praise, commend, laud* or *glorify*. There is also the root הָלַל, meaning to *shine* or *give light*. This root also has another meaning of to *rage* or *rave* and in the form הוֹלֵל means to *confound*. The dominant spiritual characteristic in the world of making is the confounding of the spiritual. It is out of this confounding and concealment which the essence of the physical must be lifted. And the lifting of it out of its confoundment, produces the returning light, the precious light which originates in מְלָכוֹת and ascends to כְּתוּר. In addition, the dominant Sephirah in the world of making is מְלָכוֹת and מְלָכוֹת is associated with speech. Speech which lifts up is speech which extols and lauds.

This blessing covering the four worlds from top to bottom is such a blessing that no matter what we say, our saying falls short of our thought and feeling. So we exclaim:

Blessed be the One,

בְּרִיךְ הוּא

Beyond all the blessings

לְעֵלָה מִן כָּל בְּרַכְתָּא וְשִׁירָתָא

And hymns,

Praises and consolations,

תְּשֻׁבָּהָתָא וְנַחֲמָתָא

That are spoken in the universe.

דְּאִמְרֵן בְּעֵלְמָא

We want to say a beyond, which is a beyond which that can be said.

When we live life this way, the abundant goodness that God is constantly giving is fully received. By completely receiving it, we give none of it to the other side. What results is peace, completeness, and well-being from the

heavens, the most elevated place, to within the heights, an elevated place. The Zohar tells us that the heavens are associated with the Sefhirot **הַסֵּדֶר**, **הַנְּבוּרָה**, **הַתְּפָאֶרֶת**, **נְצִיחַ**, **הוֹד** and **יְסוֹד**.^{2,3,4} The heights are associated with the Sefhirah **מְלָכוּת**, since it occurs in the verse whose main verb comes from the root **עָשָׂה**, meaning to *make, do work, labor, act, produce, yield, create, perform* or *accomplish*. This is the same root associated with **עֲשֵׂיָהּ**, the world of Assiyah, whose dominant Sefhirah is **מְלָכוּת**.

We affirm that God's goodness which flows from the heavens should be fully received by us and the household of all Israel by saying:

<i>May there be abundant peace,</i>	יְהֵא שְׁלָמָא רַבָּא
<i>Completeness, and well-being,</i>	
<i>From the heavens,</i>	מִן שָׁמַיָא
<i>And good life for us</i>	וְחַיִּים טוֹבִים עֲלֵינוּ
<i>And for all the household of Israel.</i>	וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל

And we affirm God's goodness which flows from within the heights should be fully received by us and the household of all Israel by saying:

<i>May the One who makes peace,</i>	עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם
<i>Completeness and well-being,</i>	
<i>Within the heights,</i>	בְּמִרוֹמָיו
<i>May this One make peace,</i>	הוּא עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם
<i>Completeness, and well-being,</i>	
<i>For us and for all the household of Israel.</i>	עֲלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל

Peace means internal calmness, a calmness that cannot be shaken. Completeness means that our actions become actions which are complete, actions which complete the Holy Name. In and of themselves, nothing more is needed. The actions are their own entrance to eternity. Such actions are actions which are done for the sake of Heaven. Well-being means that the effect of our actions adds to our physical, mental, emotional and spiritual wellness.

² *The Zohar*, Vol 4, (II, 164b), trans. Maurice Simon and Harry Sperling (London: Soncino Press, 1978), p. 68.

³ *The Zohar*, Vol 1, (I, 30b), trans. Maurice Simon and Harry Sperling (London: Soncino Press, 1978), p. 117.

⁴ *The Zohar*, Vol 5, (III, 287a), trans. Maurice Simon and Harry Sperling (London: Soncino Press, 1978), p. 378.

Living with well-being means to be really living, deeply living, fully living, holy living.