



Praying WITH Passion

GIVING MORE MEANING TO OUR TEFILLAH - ONE WEEK AT A TIME **ISSUE NO. 177**

Tefillah Focus Of The Week: **קדיש יתום** *Unity and Peace*

יתברך וישתבח ויתפאר ויתרומם
ויתנשא ויתהדר ויתעלה ויתהלל
שמה דקדשא, בריך הוא... עושה
שלום במרומוי הוא יעשה שלום
עלינו ועל כל ישראל ואמרו, אמן.

Meaning:

The simple translation of the prayer

Blessed, praised, glorified, extolled, mighty, upraised, and lauded be the Name of the Holy One, Blessed is He ... He Who makes peace in His heights, may He, in His compassion, **make peace upon us**, and upon all Israel. Now respond: Amen.

Theme:

An essential concept of the prayer

Do-It-Yourself Peace

The Torah and Jewish history teach us that when we are unified in service to Hashem, we achieve peace.

Insight:

Deeper meanings of the theme

The Recipe for Peace

We end the *Kaddish* with a request for peace: עושה שלום במרומוי הוא יעשה שלום עלינו, ועל כל ישראל, "He Who makes peace in His heights, may He, in His compassion, make peace upon us, and upon all Israel." But what is the elusive recipe for this longed-for peace? When the Jews approached

Mount Sinai to accept the Torah, "Israel encamped there, opposite the mountain" (*Shemos* 19:2). Rashi (*Ibid*) explains that the verb "*vayichan* — and [Israel] encamped," is written in the singular, in contrast to the previous verbs, which reflect the multitude. This use of the singular teaches that the huge multitude encamped like a single person, with a single aspiration.

The Midrash (*Maseches Derech Eretz, Perek Shalom, Halachah* 5) expounds: "*Hakadosh Baruch Hu* said: 'Because the Jewish people hate disagreements and love peace and they encamped as one, now I will give them the Torah.'" How were they able to rise from a slave mentality to this exalted level in so short a time? The simple (cont. P. 2)

Word to the Wise: Meaning within the word

Kaddish, which ends by inviting the congregants to respond אמן together, invites them to confirm their belief in G-d. The Gemara (*Shabbos* 119b) states that the word אמן is the acronym of the words "Ei-l melech ne'eman,"—G-d, trustworthy King. Our belief in G-d encompasses a complete trust in the absolute truth and trustworthiness of G-d's every word. This level of faith is the foundation that had to be laid before the Jewish people were capable of receiving and embracing G-d's holy Torah and it is at the core of the covenant between G-d and Israel (Adapted from *Hearts Full of Faith*, Rabbi Mattisyahu Salomon, *ArtScroll/Mesorah*, pp. 20-21).



Dovid Hamelech wrote in *Tehillim* (Chapter 119) "I chose the way of emunah and found Torah." This means that by answering "אמן", which is an expression of faith and belief in Hashem, one merits attaining a greater level of Torah (*Keser Melucha*, page 99).

Just as when one answers אמן as he should, he merits having the gates of Gan Eden opened before him; in this world, too, gates are opened for him—the gates of Torah learning and mitzvos. He merits receiving a greater level of wisdom and understanding of Torah, and thus is spiritually elevated (From a letter written by author of *Siddur HaGra*, cited in *Keser Melucha*, page 99).

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 קדיש יתום *Unity and Peace*

(INSIGHT cont.)

answer is that their desire for G-d enabled them to completely subjugate themselves to Him. Freed from their emotional armor, they melded easily, achieving the sublime unity that can be reached only in the service of a spiritual purpose (*Ohr Gedalyahu, Shemos*, p. 126, s.v. *K'mo she'haya*).

The same dynamic brought the Jews together to fend off the national catastrophe planned by Haman. Mordechai tells Esther, "Go and gather all the Jews" (*Esther 4:16*). Maharal (*Ohr Chodosh*, cited in *Ohr Gedalyahu, Devarim*, p. 163,

fn. 3) explains that the fact that the Jews gathered together to reach out to G-d resulted in complete *teshuvah*, which in turn resulted in salvation.

Visualize:

Images that bring the prayer to life

Getting to the Point

There is a model of Jewish marriage that counselors use to help couples understand the goals of their union. It is a pyramid, with each spouse at one corner of the base and G-d at the pinnacle. The greater the distance from G-d that they

stand, the farther apart are the spouses. As they climb spiritually — toward the pinnacle — they come ever closer to each other.

This model works for us as a nation, too. When our striving is toward G-d, the distance between us diminishes. Rather than having our unity thrust upon us by our enemies, we can embrace it, and thereby stand ready to be redeemed.

Try This!

- ▶ Imagine that when you are hearing *Kaddish* said, you are standing outside Hashem's "palace window," knowing that because He hears you respond to *Kaddish* with *אמן יהא שמיה רבה* in the proper way, He will help you with whatever you need.

Did You Know

▶ Standing for *Kaddish*

The "Insight" section cited Chazal's teaching that, "When a person answers*אמן יהא שמיה רבה* with all his might, even a decree of seventy years is torn up." "All his might" means all his *kavannah*, with heart and soul. Therefore, a person should be sure to focus his mind on the words his lips are pronouncing (*Mishneh Berurah 56:1*). He should also respond in a loud voice (*Siman 56:1*).

The Chofetz Chaim wrote: "...It is impossible to fathom the number of salvations that could be brought about for Klal Yisrael if the inhabitants of each city were indeed to assemble in the Shul and daven together, and respond*אמן יהא שמיה רבה* in unison every day. In this way, thousands of people could be saved from death (*Michtavei Chofetz Chaim*, pp. 167).