

A124

A124

The Kaddish, that one prayer which, through the indirect veneration of the dead, has done more to keeping Judaism living in America than any other prayer has its origin

in the Haftorah we read this morning. The spirit of prophecy moves Ezekiel, and the

Prophet speaks the word of G-d והיה שם ה' מקדש ונשאם ויהיה שם ה' מקדש

"Thus will I be magnified and sanctified and known in the eyes of the many nations". And

from these words והיה שם ה' מקדש ונשאם ויהיה שם ה' מקדש do we derive the familiar יהיה שם ה' מקדש

And may G-d's great Name be magnified and sanctified.

The leading theme of both the prayer and the prophecy is one which is fascinating in its theological and practical aspects, and is known to us as: Kiddush Ha-Shem or, translating literally, The Sanctification of G-d's Name.

Kiddush Ha-Shem is one of the leading motifs in all Jewish life. Millions of our peoples throughout history have readily given their lives for K.H. Halachah places it on par, within its negation or transgression, with the three cardinal sins of idolatry, bloodshed and incest.

But the English translation of K.H. - Sanctification of G-d's Name - tells us very little about what it means, and even less about how it is achieved. Let us delineate some important aspects of K.H. in the hope that this magnificent religious ideal will become more and more intelligible and, hence, more meaningful to us.

Allow me to introduce you to the first of these - the very definition of קדש - by pointing out some strange words by our Prophet this morning.

Recall the verse ~~From~~ first mentioned, והיה שם ה' מקדש ונשאם ויהיה שם ה' מקדש

".....Before the many אומות, or nations". And several verses further we read:

והיה שם ה' מקדש ונשאם ויהיה שם ה' מקדש and I will send a fine

אויב (every man ^{ENEMY} ~~enemy~~ of Israel), and up on the island dwellers, and they shall

know that I am the Lord". Again the prophet is concerned with the אומות and then

והיה שם ה' מקדש ונשאם ויהיה שם ה' מקדש "and the nations shall know that I am the Lord, the I

Holy One in Israel,

And not only in Ezekiel, but in many books of the Bible do we meet up with this desire to prove to the עוֹלָם that our religion is right. When Israel was threatened with extinction in the desert, Moses turned to G-d and said לָמָּה יִגְדַּל יְהוָה בְּעַדְיָנוּ "Why should the Egyptians have the opportunity of pointing a finger at us". And centuries later David wondered aloud עוֹלָם יִגְדַּל יְהוָה "What will the gentile nations say about this?".

And indeed how strange all this is! I can understand if a modern Jew, with a weak backbone and a strong stomach will eat sea-food because he is afraid of his non-Jewish colleagues' remarks. I can understand a modern fashionable and society conscious Jew refusing to sway while praying because it is too "oriental" and will attract the derision of his Christian neighbors.

But why, ~~oh~~ why, should a Prophet - and Prophets were notorious for their independence and originality - why should a Prophet worry about G-d's powers in Egypt, or poor publicity in Mageg or a derisive smirk in Syria? Why should they suddenly be so concerned with impressing the עוֹלָם? Were they then עוֹלָם יִגְדַּל יְהוָה? Did they thrive on the עוֹלָם compliment and suffer when he sneered? And G-d - does G-d need the עוֹלָם or, for that matter, any man's approval? What is this tie-up between sanctification and the עוֹלָם, between K.H. and G-d's prestige? - and between יִשְׂרָאֵל and Israel's welfare?

And yet, that is the clue to the very heart, the very essence of K.H.

For the glory of G-d is His acceptance by all the world and the practice of His ordained rules of ethical conduct by all His creatures. G-d's sanctification comes about when His people, whom He has promised to be with and help and redeem, prosper and fare well. For in the eyes of the world, when Brael prospers, it is a sign that the Divine promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are being kept and hence that the G-d of Israel is the G-d of Truth. The sanctification of G-d, His glorification by the peoples of the earth. This flows from the well-being of Israel. That is K.H.. When, however, Israel suffers and is pillaged and pillared, then the peoples ask: Where is your G-d and all His promises? Then they disbelieve the chosenness of Israel, the Torah - and then the Jewish concept of G-d in its entirety.

And that is עלן הים, The desecration of G-d's name, or the opposite of י"ד.

Let me give you an example. Until 1948, and since the Destruction of the Temple in the year 70 of the common era, conversions of gentiles to Judaism were few and far ⁱⁿ between. We always discouraged easy conversions, and for almost 1900 years we didn't have to do much discouraging. Since 1948, however, without any compunction by Jews and, on the contrary, despite our traditional negative attitude, conversions have increased in heavy numbers. I'm sure you've read of an entire Italian village which converted to Judaism and settled in Israel.

Why the change? Because we could not expect a י"ד to embrace the religion of a people who were in exile, discarded and unloved, persecuted and pillaged. If, as they say (the silent argument was), G-d chose them, is this chosenness? History was a denial of G-d's promise to the Patriarchs. History was in itself עלן הים And then 1948. The promises to Abraham, made 3 1/2 thousand years ago, was on the verge of realization. Israel gained a new respect in the eyes of the world, and automatically the G-d who had redeemed them after all these centuries re study. K.H. G-d again performed miracles with Israel.

As a matter of fact, while this K.H. has greatly rejuvenated our religion, it has unerved some of the other great religions of the world. For the Church of Rome, the wandering Jew, without a home and without rest and peace and security, was always a symbol of the truth of their religion. This is, they claimed, what happens to a people who rejects Their Messiah. They built an entire Theology on Jewish pain and suffering and homelessness. No wonder they fought so hard and bitter against the creation of the Jewish State. It deprived them of more than a symbol. It knocked their theological props from under them. Here is a nation that rejected their Messiah and, after 2,000 years, has risen again to believe their entire doctrine! And no wonder, too, that this same group is so determined to prevent Jerusalem from again becoming the Jewish capitol! So that the State of Israel, the rejuvenation of our people, the proud freedom and independence we have attained, are the bases of the greatest K.H. in 20 centuries!

The mystics expressed that idea with the phrase מלך עמו. The Divine Presence goes into exile when Jews are in exile. For when Jews are carted off in cattle trucks, when Jews are killed like animals, when Jews are innovated into soap, then a world cries out אין אלוהים. There is no justice and there is no Judge. There is no G-d! But when the world sees broken Jews rise in pride, when the world sees a handful of scholars, writers, tailors and cloak makers beat 7 Arab nations and an England and declare a state and begin an ingathering of Exiles, then the world looks on in astonishment and cries out אשר יש'ו קדש Holy, Holy, Holy, the Lord of Hosts, redeemer of Israel! G-d is redeemed with the redemption of Israel. K.H.

But, of course, when political success is not sufficient to ensure K.H., when Jews prove by example that G-d is with them, that is equally a K.H.. When Israel as a nation prospers materially and politically, K.H. results because the nations see G-d's promise to redeem Israel being kept. And when Jews as individuals remain loyal to their G-d, when they observe His commandments, when they live morally and ethically, that is K.H. because the people see that G-d's Trah is fulfilling its functions of אשר יש'ו קדש, of purifying and elevating human nature.

When the eye sees a Synagogue packed with Jews in earnest devotion, that is K.H. When he reads his papers and notices that in the recent trend to better attendance at churches, that Jews lag way behind their neighbors, that is a great ענין. When the eye sees a Jew unashamed to have a דג in his yard, or a £ דג lamp in his window, or a דג in his hand, that is K.H. When he sees Jews congregating on the stairs outside while Services are being held inside; when he sees Jews leaving right after Yizkor and before שחרית, when he sees a service - even on שבת develop into rowdiness, that is ענין.

So that the first method of K.H. is by assuring the welfare of Israel as such; and the second, by acting like a people of G-d.

The saying of the Kaddish ^{implies} beta אין אלהים אחרים and how? אין אלהים אחרים by establishing His Kingdom and, as the Siphardic version adds, אין אלהים אחרים by bringing in the redemption of Israel and bringing close the Messiah. So that is this 1st part of Kaddish We ask for K.H. in the first manner. And then we'll respond: ש"ע (trans).

May G-d's name be blessed in this world. When I act like a Jew, G-d's name is blessed. When I attend a Synagogue regularly, G-d's name is blessed. When I doven because I want to, and not only because of לש"ך, G-d's name is doubly sanctified. When I am active, and decent, and generous, G-d's name is blessed. That too is K.H. They are two of the ways of establishing G-d's Kingdom, of sanctifying His name.

And there is yet a third, and the last we shall discuss this morning. To do this, let me ask you to remember back to the time when Moses was leading his disgruntled people through the terrible Sahara on their way to an unknown promised land. At one point, the thirst was terrible. But Israel's complaining was more terrible. G-d told Moses to address a rock and that a miracle would occur, water would gush forth from it. Instead, Moses, in the company of his brother Aaron, approaches the rock and strikes it, saying שמעו ישראל ואלהים אחד, from this rock shall we bring forth water. Israel gets its water, but G-d is angry with Moses, אשר לא אמר כדבר יהוה. Moses had committed a sin, the sin of אשר לא אמר כדבר יהוה, and so severe was this sin relative to his character - that he would die before crossing the Jordan, and be deprived of leading his people into the Promised Land.

What is the sin of Moses which incurred G-d's wrath? Most of us have been taught that the sin consisted of his striking rather than talking to the rock. Perhaps such is Rashi's explanation. But that does not account for G-d's speaking of Moses' not performing K.H. However, Rambam has a much deeper commentary. The sin lay in the verse אשר לא אמר כדבר יהוה אשר לא אמר כדבר יהוה we..... What they should have said, argues Rambam, is אשר לא אמר כדבר יהוה ... G-d will.... In other words, the sin consisted in their failure to attribute the miracle to G-d. Had they ascribed it to G-d, then when the waters came forth the people would have developed a deeper faith [&] a greater reverence for G-d. That, indeed, would have been K.H. When Moses and Aaron did not do so, G-d said; אשר לא אמר כדבר יהוה. You failed to sanctify My name.....

So that the third method of SP is achieved by ascribing all life, all action, all ~~creation~~ and creativity to its true source : G-d.

When a businessman lives under the delusion that his financial success is due to his know-how and acumen and shrewdness and hard work, he is perpetrating עוון for he is setting himself up as a Divinity. When he says "I'm rich עוון, Thank G-d", he is a עוון.

When Israelis think that it is their own power, their own strategy, their own superior tactics, which gave them victory, they are living under the terrible delusion of עוון. When they ascribe their victory to its true source - G-d - and act accordingly, that is K.H.

When the greatest nation in the world develops a self-worship and thinks the "American way of Life" is a religion in which the D.A.R.'s ancestors are the Saints and industry, technique, national wealth and the Old Glory are the Principles of Faith, it tempts G-d to prove otherwise. But when it realizes that its great position was brought on by Divine Kindness, and that it should act with humility to its sister nations, that is K.H. _____

עוון Only when it is realized that national prosperity and universal peace stem from G-d, is the Name of G-d sanctified.

To summarize, then, K.H. means the glorification of G-d in the eyes of all the peoples of the world. It is achieved, first, by the welfare of G-d's chosen people; second, by the way these same people live and behave; and thirdly, by the decency and honesty and truthfulness which leads people to attribute their success to G-d.

עוון Thou, O G-d, art sanctified, when Thou preservest Thy people of Israel, when they live for Thy worship, and when they know that they must praise Thee for their good fortune.