

# KADDISH - MOURNING WELL SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Handouts (Background Info, Questions For Reflection, Activity, Mourners Prayer)
- Bibles
- Sheets of lined paper
- Pens

# KADDISH - MOURNING WELL

## BACKGROUND INFO

- Read Ez. 38:23.
- The word Kaddish refers to the 'Mourners Prayer'. This prayer is to be recited daily for eleven months by the eldest son following the death of a parent, and thereafter on each anniversary of the death. The Kaddish may also be recited by other family members during their time of mourning and/or in the case of the death of other close family members.
- Kaddish means 'sanctification' and refers to the sanctification of God's name. The Kaddish, or Mourners Prayer, is not a prayer of mourning for the deceased, but is a prayer that magnifies the name of the Lord.
- The Mourners Prayer is recited in front of ten elders because during a time of great loss you might expect that a person could lose their faith in God or cry out against God's injustice. Therefore, Judaism requires that a mourner stand up every day for eleven months and publicly reaffirm their faith in God, despite his or her loss.
- Jewish mourning practices have several periods of decreasing intensity which allow for a full expression of grief while discouraging excesses of grief and allowing the mourner to gradually return to a normal life. The period of mourning lasts twelve months.

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## QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- How were you taught to mourn? Is mourning in your family an individual and/or private practice? Or, is it a community pilgrimage?
- When was the last time you had to mourn? How long did you let yourself mourn? How long did the community give you to mourn?
- Lauren Winner asserts that our Christian and North American culture tries to evade or deny the reality of death. What evidence do you see of this in your family, your community, and/or your church?
- Jewish mourning is prescribed in units of days, a week, a month and a year. If grieving well is one area that the church has much to learn from Jewish practices, what specific practices of walking through grief would be helpful to you? and/or, your congregation?
- How can your church community be more supportive during times of grief? Are there specific practices/rituals that you might suggest to the church to consider?
- What does the 'Mourner's Kaddish' with its emphasis on the greatness of God tell us about how we can grieve well as we go through our own personal laments and sorrows?
- What can we learn from the occasions in scripture when Jesus mourned? What can we learn from the way in which His first followers mourned for him before his resurrection?

# KADDISH - MOURNING WELL

## ACTIVITY - WRITE A LAMENT OR SANCTIFICATION

- Read the Mourners Prayer provided.
- Read Psalm 77. Have one person read it aloud to the group and then read it again, silently to yourself.
- Write your own personal Psalm of lament. Your lament may be about something in your life; or you may wish to lament something globally; or you may wish to lament a broken relationship or a great loss. How you choose to write your lament is up to you.
- Or, write a Psalm sanctification that would magnify the name of God during a time of trial or mourning.

# KADDISH - THE MOURNER'S PRAYER

Mourners: May His great Name grow exalted and sanctified

**Congr: Amen.**

Mourners: in the world that He created as He willed.  
May He give reign to His kingship in your lifetimes  
and in your days,  
and in the lifetimes of the entire Family of Israel,  
swiftly and soon. Now say:

**Mourners and Congr: Amen. May His great Name be  
blessed forever and ever.**

Mourners: May His great Name be blessed forever and ever.  
Blessed, praised, glorified, exalted, extolled,  
mighty, upraised, and lauded be the Name of the  
Holy One,  
Blessed is He

**Mourners and Congr.: Blessed is He**

Mourners: beyond any blessing and song,  
praise and consolation that are uttered in the  
world. Now say:

**Mourners and Congr.: Amen.**

Mourners: May there be abundant peace from Heaven,  
and life upon us and upon all Israel. Now say:

**Mourners and Congr.: Amen.**

Mourners: He Who makes peace in His heights, may He  
make peace,  
upon us and upon all Israel. Now say:

**Mourners and Congr.: Amen.**