

The Daily RYS - 7/6/06 - RYS does not say Kaddish on his father's Yahrzeit

Please note how the following story differs with practices that one sometimes sees today.

Firstly, some people seem to be almost willing "to kill" to daven for the Amud when they feel they have a right to the Amud. Secondly, it does not say that they made two minyanim, so that RYS and the other fellow could each lead the davening. (Perhaps there were only 19 people present, but I doubt this.) Thirdly, RYS held the halacha that only one person is supposed to say kaddish at a time. There are some places (very few) where this is still practiced.

From The Mussar Movement, Volume 1, Part 2 pages 248 - 249.

On one of the anniversaries of his father's death, R. Israel was in Memel. He was informed that someone else in the synagogue wished to say Kaddish. Now R. Israel was very insistent that only one person at a time be allowed to recite the Kaddish at the services [28] and apparently this congregation had complied with his ruling. Reb Yitzchak Isaacson was observing the jahrzeit of a daughter who had died very young. Now the Halachah gives precedence to a son observing the jahrzeit of a parent on these occasions, and R. Israel was obviously entitled to the privilege. Sensing the grief he would cause the father by depriving him of the opportunity to say Kaddish for his daughter, R. Israel went up to him and said: "You sir, will say Kaddish." The worshippers expressed their surprise. Not only had R. Israel yielded his own right, but also overlooked the duty of honoring his father, since he was, by law, obliged to say Kaddish. He explained to them that the merit of extending kindness (gemi-lut chesed) to a fellow Jew possessed far greater value than the saying of Kaddish.[29]

[28.] See R. Naftali Amsterdam's will, published in Or Hamusar No. 13. See Vol. II of the Hebrew edition of this series, Tenu'at Hamusar, II, Chap. 25.

[29.] Ernile Benjamin, op. cit., p. 25.

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