

בית הוראה דיעטראיט
BAIS HORAAH OF DETROIT
HALACHA HOTLINE

UNDER THE AUSPICES OF HaRav Shmuel Irons שליט"א VAAD HALACHA Rav Aharon Yoel Sorscher · Rav Yissachar Wolf · Rav Boruch Miller

KITCHEN * SHABBOS * YOM TOV * BRACHOS * AVEILUS * TAHARAS HAMISHPACHA * EVERYDAY SHAILOS

ISSUE #20 – KIDDUSH LEVANA FAQs

Commonly Received Questions and their Answers

Below are some common questions and answers based on psakim from the rabbonim of the Bais Horaah. Please note: in the event one believes they have heard a different opinion in the past, one's family posek should always be consulted. Mareh mekomos for any specific answers below are available by email request to ask@bhdetroit.org.

● When is the earliest that one may say Kiddush Levana?

- The earliest time to say Kiddush Levana is when the new moon is large enough that it could provide illumination in the absence of city lights. Chazal determined this to be 72 hours after the molad (time of the new moon). Note: The molad is commonly published in the luach in accordance with Jerusalem Solar Time. As such, the published times must first be converted to local time. In Detroit, currently we subtract seven hours from the published time. By way of example, the molad for Teves of this year is published as 5:33 PM on Monday, therefore, we can begin saying Kiddush Levana on Thursday night. There are, however, some kehilos that have the minhag to wait seven days from the molad before saying Kiddush Levana.
- Please Note: You can text the word **LEVANA** to our hotline (248-923-1613) to receive the earliest and latest times for Kiddush Levana.

● Should one wait until Motzaei Shabbos?

- There is an advantage to reciting Kiddush Levana specifically on Motzaei Shabbos. However, if there is a tzibur saying it earlier in the week, it is preferable to say it with the tzibur as opposed to waiting for Motzaei Shabbos. If there will definitely be a minyan saying Kiddush Levana on Motzaei Shabbos, and there will still be at least four possible nights to say it after Motzaei Shabbos, one may wait. The expected weather conditions should also be taken into consideration, as well as the possibility of forgetting to say it altogether.

● When is the latest time to say Kiddush Levana?

- Kiddush Levana should be said within 14 $\frac{3}{4}$ days of the molad. If it was not said within this timeframe, there is room to be lenient for another seven hours. If it is delayed further by pressing need, one can be lenient to say it until the end of the 15th of the month. If the 15th passed and one still hasn't said Kiddush Levana, a halachic authority should be consulted. It is important to remember that oftentimes the ending time published in a luach must also be converted to local time.

● Can Kiddush Levana be said on Friday night?

- If Friday night is the last night or the second-to-last night to say Kiddush Levana, it may be said with a bracha, but without any of the additional Kiddush Levana tefilos.

● May Kiddush Levana be said before Maariv?

- Even if there is a tzibur saying Kiddush Levana (e.g. at the conclusion of an earlier minyan) one should not say it prior to Maariv. This is due to the rule of *tadir v'she'eino tadir, tadir kodem*. However, if there is a threat of missing Kiddush Levana altogether, or if there will not be a tzibur saying it after his Maariv minyan, he should say it with the tzibur prior to Maariv.

● If the moon is covered by clouds, may Kiddush Levana still be said?

- 1) Part of the moon must be uncovered, or the outline of the moon must be clearly visible through the clouds.
- 2) The light of the moon must be strong enough that if there were no city lights it would be possible to derive benefit from it.
- 3) The moon must stay in this state for the duration of the bracha. However, if it did not, one is still yotzei Kiddush Levana.

● Can one recite Kiddush Levana without anyone else present?

- Ideally Kiddush Levana should be said with a minyan. If that is not an option, it should be said with at least two others in order to create a minimum halachic multitude (*rov am*). If one is certain that he will subsequently have an opportunity to say it with at least two other people, and there are four more possible nights remaining, he should wait rather than saying Kiddush Levana alone. Otherwise, if there is a concern that he will miss saying it altogether, he should say it even by himself.

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- **Should boys under the age of bar-mitzvah be taught to perform Kiddush Levana?**
 - It is a good practice to teach boys who are old enough to say Kiddush Levana to do so.
- **Should a boy who is turning thirteen wait until after his bar mitzvah to say Kiddush Levana?**
 - It is best to wait until he becomes a bar mitzvah. However, if there is a risk of missing the opportunity entirely due to weather conditions, he should not wait.
- **If one is sitting shiva, should he say Kiddush Levana?**
 - He should wait until after the conclusion of shiva. However, if the zman for Kiddush Levana will end before the shiva is over, it may be said even during shiva. The avel may step outside to do so, however it should be said alone. He should say only the bracha, omitting the additional Kiddush Levana tefilos.
- **May one respond Aleichem Shalom while in the middle of reciting Kiddush Levana?**
 - One should not respond while in the middle of the bracha or a pasuk. However, if one accidentally responded, the bracha or pasuk need not be repeated. Additionally, even if no response was received, the Shalom Aleichem is still counted as one of the prescribed three greetings.
- **To how many people should one say Shalom Aleichem?**
 - The common minhag is to say Shalom Aleichem to three people. If that is not an option, it may be said multiple times to the same person. One who is saying Kiddush Levana alone may say Shalom Aleichem three times to himself.
- **May Kiddush Levana be said indoors while looking out the window?**
 - Kiddush Levana should not be said indoors. In a case of great need, where one is unable to go outdoors, it may be said while viewing the moon through a window. The window must be large enough and clear enough to allow the light to shine in. Under these conditions, Kiddush Levana may even be said from inside a moving car or airplane.
- **May one recite Kiddush Levana while standing under a tree?**
 - Kiddush Levana may be said underneath a tree, however it should preferably not be said while underneath a roof or awning.
- **Should one look at or face the moon during the bracha?**
 - One should look at the moon briefly prior to starting the bracha. Many have the minhag to face mizrach while reciting the bracha.
- **May Kiddush Levana be recited near a garbage dumpster or portable bathroom?**
 - Like all devarim sheb'kedusha, Kiddush Levana may not be recited within 7.5 feet of the odor emanating from a foul-smelling object. Additionally, if the item is visible, one should face a different direction while reciting Kiddush Levana in order to satisfy all opinions.
- **May Kiddush Levana be said by heart?**
 - No. It is brought in halacha that tefilos which are generally not said more often than every 30 days (e.g. Kiddush Levana and Ya'aleh V'yavo) must be recited from a siddur.
- **Are women obligated in Kiddush Levana?**
 - There is no obligation for women to recite Kiddush Levana, and they should not do so for several reasons.

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