



B'NAI DAVID-JUDEA

Shabbat Shorts

Last time on Shabbat Shorts we established that women are obligated on a biblical level to recite Kiddush. Now we will explore if they can say Kiddush on another person's behalf.

The Shulchan Aruch explains (271:2) : מוציאות את האנשים הואיל וחייבות מן התורה : כמותם, "Women may recite Kiddush for men, fulfilling their obligation, since they have the same Torah obligation to recite Kiddush as men do". This is very clear: Women may recite Kiddush on behalf of anyone.

You may be asking, what about kol isha (the prohibition of hearing a woman's voice)? The rule is that for holy words of prayer that cause השראת השכינה (the bringing down of the presence of the Shechinah), הרהור (sexual thoughts that form the basis for the concern about kol isha) are not a concern.

The Mishnah Berurah adds that the Taz, the Gra, and the Magen Avraham agree with the Shulchan Aruch that women may recite Kiddush for men.

Elya Rabba records an additional stringent custom: מ"מ יש להחמיר לכתחלה שלא תוציא אשה אנשים שאינם מבני ביתה דזילא מילתא, "Nevertheless there are those who are stringent from the outset that a woman does not say Kiddush for men who are not family members because of 'zila milta'" (Mishnah Berurah 271:2:4). 'Zila milta' has nothing to do with a woman's halachic obligation but has to do with what is considered communally appropriate for women to do in public.

Practically, the outcome of this opinion varies by community. In a community where men and women do not interact outside of their families, it would be wildly inappropriate for a woman to say Kiddush for male non-relatives. But in a community like ours, in which men and woman who are not related interact

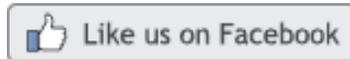
all of the time without inappropriateness, a woman saying Kiddush for non-family members is completely appropriate.

Halachically, a woman may say Kiddush for herself, for other women, for children, and for men because her obligation is biblical, and therefore can discharge anyone else's obligation. In the immortal words of the Mishnah Berurah (271:2:5): דלענין קידוש אנשים ונשים שוין, "With respect to Kiddush, men and women are the same".

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