



Making Kiddush on Friday Night

Kiddush means “sanctification” and is a ritual that proclaims the sanctity or holiness of Shabbat. It comes from the Hebrew root *kadosh* (“holy”) that is heard in so many of the traditional prayers.

The ritual of Kiddush is based on Exodus 20:8, the fourth of the Ten Commandments: “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy”. The rabbis said that we do this symbolically by blessing wine at the commencement of Shabbat Eve on Friday night. Tradition prescribes that it is done in each home at Shabbat dinner and also for the community in the synagogue at Shabbat services.

How is Kiddush done? It consists of two blessings or benedictions, a short one blessing the wine and then a full paragraph in praise of the Sabbath day itself. Since wine is a symbol of joy in Judaism, the rabbis ruled that every effort should be made to obtain wine for these blessings. If there are members of the family who cannot drink wine for health reasons, kosher grape juice is also acceptable. By tradition, at least 3.3 ounces of wine is poured into a kiddush cup. While there is no prescribed form or design for the kiddush cup, and while in principle any cup may be used, Jews have always sought to beautify the mitzvah (called “*hiddur mitzvah*”) by obtaining a specially designed kiddush cup. The Sisterhood Gift Shop has a large selection of kiddush cups in a variety of designs.

The structure of the kiddush is to first read a small introductory passage about the Sabbath from the Torah (Genesis 1:31-2:3). Then the blessings are chanted. The best way to learn them is to listen to the CD *Songs and Psalms of Beth Tikvah* (available for purchase through the office). The cup is then raised and all sing:

ברוך אתה יי אלהים מלך העולם, בורא פרי הגפן.
 ברוך אתה יי אלהים מלך העולם, אשר קדשנו
 במצותיו וצונו בנג, ושבח קדשו באהבה ובכבוד
 הנצילנו, וצונו למעשה בראשית. כי הוא יום חזק
 למקרא קדש, ובר ליציאת מצרים. כירבנו בתורה
 ואותו קדשנו מכל העמים, ושבח קדשך באהבה
 ובכבוד הנחלקנו. ברוך אתה יי, מקדש השבת.

Ba-uch a-ta Adonai, Eh-lo-he-nu meh-lech ha-olam, bo-rei p’ri ha-ga-fen.
 Ba-ruch a-ta Adonai, Eh-lo-hei-nu meh-lech ha-olam, a-she-ri ki-d’sha-nu b’mitz-
 vo-tav v’ra’tza va-nu, v’sha-bat kod-sho b’a-ha-va u-v’ra-tzon hin-chi-la-nu, zi-ka-
 ron l’ma-a-sei v’rei-sheet. Ki hu yom t’chi-la l’mik-ra-ei ko-desh, zei-cher li-tzi-at
 Mitz-ra-yim. Ki va-nu va-char-ta v’o-tan-nu ki-dash-ta mi-kol ha-a-mim, v’sha-bat
 kod-sh’cha b’a-ha-va u-v’ra-tzon hin-chal-ta-nu. Ba-ruch a-ta Adonai, m’ka-deish
 ha-Shabbat.

We praise You, Eternal God, Sovereign of the universe: You call us to holiness with the Mitzvah of Shabbat – the sign of Your love, a reminder of Your creative work, and of our liberation from Egyptian bondage: our day of days. On Shabbat especially, we hearken to Your call to serve You as a holy people. We praise You, O God, for the holiness of Shabbat.