

HAVDALA SERVICE

Havdalah is a brief ceremony that marks the end of the Shabbat, the Jewish day of rest. The word havdala literally means separation, and refers to our leaving the Shabbat, or to put it another way, Shabbat's leaving us. In a deeper sense, the word havdala means a clearly marked sense of differentiation.

The concept of making distinctions permeates many facets of religious life. We distinguish between holy time and ordinary time. Not every day of the calendar is the same. There are days that are special: Shabbat, festivals, fast days, and days of remembrance and contemplation. We declare certain books to be holy; we study and treat them differently from secular books. We treat holy spaces with particular reverence. The havdala ceremony is designed to ease our way back into the regular weekday world. It reminds us of the truth that there are six days of labor and struggle, but there is a seventh day of rest and comfort for our bodies and souls.

The Torah teaches that God created the world by making distinctions, first between light and darkness, next between water and empty space, finally between earth and water. We, too, make distinctions in our lives, and primary among them is the distinction between sacred time and ordinary time. To mark the beginning of a sacred time, we light two candles and recite a bracha, which praises God who commanded us to kindle the lights in celebration of the occasion. We mark the end of that sacred time period with Havdalah. It, too, begins with light, as we kindle a braided candle.

There are various reasons given as to why we smell spices or herbs during the havdala service. The most accepted reason is that this serves as a sort of therapy for the faintness of soul that we feel when the extra measure of spirituality - the *neshama yeteira* - that Shabbat gives us, departs. It is meant to revive our spirits at having to face the week of labor and problems ahead of us. The fragrance of the spices and herbs also reminds us of the sweetness and serenity of the Shabbat experience that we have just passed through. It also serves as a reminder of the offering of incense, made of thirteen special spices,

that was part of the daily service in the Temple in Jerusalem. Some say that the spices are smelled so that the sweetness of the Sabbath will be carried over into the work week.

The havdala candle is braided and has two wicks. Since the blessing refers to "lights of the fire" in the plural, two wicks are used in one candle to enable one to extinguish them at the same time. Viewing one's hands and fingers by the light of the candle commemorates the creation of fire (per Jewish tradition) by Adam, the original man, as the basis for all later progress in civilization. Since we do not light fires or turn on electricity on Shabbat, the lighting of a multi-wicked candle serves to remind us that Shabbat is over and that we have returned to the province of the six-day workweek. By this, the havdala candle also symbolizes man's unending and innate drive to create, invent, and attempt to make life physically more comfortable. As such, it serves as the proper introduction to the week of work and labor that follows the end of the Sabbath day. It is the harbinger of the "good week" to come.

The havdala service teaches that there is a difference between the holy and the secular, between Shabbat and the days of the week and also between Israel and the nations of the world. We, as Jews, are held to a special standard: in the words of the Torah, to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. This is an especially important idea to remember as we embark on our workday week of commerce, work and school. We are commanded to be a holy nation not only in the synagogue and study hall, but in the marketplace and workplace as well.

Text of Havdala:

Hinei Eil y'shu-ati, evtach v'lo efchad, ki azi v'zimrat Yah Adonai va-y'hi li lishu-a. Ush'avtem mayim b'sason mimai-y'nei ha-y'shu-a. L-Adonai ha-y'shu-a, al amcha birchatecha, selah. Adonai Tzva-ot imanu, misgav lanu Elohei Ya-akov, selah. Adonai Tzva-ot ashrei adam botei-ach bach. Adonai hoshiya, hamelech ya-aneinu v'yom koreinu. La-y'hudim haita ora v'simcha v'sason vikar, kein tih'yeh lanu. Kos y'shu-ot eh-sa uv'sheim Adonai ekra.

הִנֵּה אֵל יְשׁוּעָתִי, אֶבְטַח וְלֹא אֶפְחַד, כִּי עֲדֵי וְזִמְרַת יְהוָה יִי, וַיְהִי לִי לִישׁוּעָה. וּשְׂאֵבֹתָם מִיָּם בְּשִׁשׁוֹן, מִמַּעַיְנֵי הַיְשׁוּעָה. לֵי יְהוָה הַיְשׁוּעָה, עַל עַמְךָ בְּרִכְתֶּךָ סֵלָה. יְיָ צְבָאוֹת עִמָּנוּ, מִשְׁגֵּב לָנוּ אֱלֹהֵי יִצְקָב סֵלָה. יְיָ צְבָאוֹת, אֲשֶׁרִי אָדָם בְּטַח בְּךָ. יְיָ הוֹשִׁיעָה, הַמֶּלֶךְ יַעֲנֵנוּ בַיּוֹם קְרָאֵנוּ. לַיהוּדִים הַיְתֵה אוֹרָה וְשִׂמְחָה וְשִׁשׁוֹן וּיְקָר. בֵּן תְּהִיָּה לָנוּ. כּוֹס יְשׁוּעוֹת אֲשָׂא, וּבְשֵׁם יְיָ אֶקְרָא.

Behold! God is my salvation, I shall trust and not fear - for God, Hashem, is my might and my praise - and He was a salvation for me. You can draw water with joy, from the springs of salvation. Salvation is Hashem's, upon Your people is Your blessing, Selah. Hashem, Master of legions, is with us, a stronghold for us is the God of Jacob, Selah. Hashem, Master of legions, praised is the man who trusts in You. Hashem save! May the King answer us on the day we call. For the Jews there was light, gladness, joy, and honor, so may it be for us. I will raise the cup of salvations, and I shall invoke the Name of Hashem.

Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam,
borei p'ri hagafen.
Blessed are You, Hashem, our God, King of the universe,
Who creates the fruit of the vine.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
בוֹרֵא פְרֵי הַגֶּפֶן.

After the following blessing, smell the spices.

Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam,
borei minei v'samim.
Blessed are You, Hashem, our God, King of the universe,
Who creates species of fragrance.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
בוֹרֵא מִיְנֵי בְשָׂמִים.

After the following blessing, hold fingers up to the flame to see the reflected light:

Baruch ata Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha'olam
borei m'orei ha-eish.
Blessed are You, Hashem, our God, King of the universe,
Who creates the illuminations of the fire.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
בוֹרֵא מְאוֹרֵי הָאֵשׁ.

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Baruch ata Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam,
hamavdil bein kodesh l'chol, bein or
l'choshech, bein Yisra-eil la-amim, bein yom
hash'vi-i l'sheishet y'mei hama-aseh. Baruch
ata Adonai, hamavdil bein kodesh l'chol.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, הַמְבַדֵּיל
בֵּין קֹדֶשׁ לְחֹל, בֵּין אֹר לְחֹשֶׁךְ, בֵּין יִשְׂרָאֵל
לְעַמִּים, בֵּין יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי לְשֵׁשֶׁת יָמֵי הַמַּעֲשֶׂה.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, הַמְבַדֵּיל בֵּין קֹדֶשׁ לְחֹל.

Blessed are You, Hashem, our God, King of the universe, Who separates between holy and secular, between light and darkness, between Israel and the nations, between the seventh day and the six days of labor.

Blessed are You, Hashem, our God, King of the universe,
Who separates between holy and secular.