

Step-by-Step Havdalah Guide

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Follow this simple guide for a Messianic Havdalah service. To mark the end of the Shabbat and separate the holy day from the rest of the week, Havdalah is held on Saturday evening at sundown.

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Items:

- 1 candle (usually a fancy havdalah candle)
- Candle holder
- Wine
- Saucer
- Aromatic spices (cinnamon, cloves, etc.)
- Headcoverings (optional)
- This guide

Blessing Over the Wine

This blessing is the same one we say when we bring in the Shabbat called the HaGafen. Fill the cup to the very brim with wine. It's okay if it overflows – that signifies our overflowing blessings. Recite the blessing but don't drink the wine until after the Havdalah service concludes.

In English:

Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe,
who creates the fruit of the vine. (Response: Amen)

In Hebrew:

בְּרִיךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן

Transliteration of the Hebrew:

Ba-ruch a-tah A-do-nai, E-lo-hei-nu me-lech ha-olam,
bo-rei pe-ri ha-ga-fen. (Response: "Amen")

Blessing Over the Spices

Pleasantly fragrant spices are smelled at the Havdalah service to remind everyone of the blessing we've been given in the Sabbath. The spices most often used are cloves and cinnamon, but you can also use hyssop, anise, and other spices. A blessing is then said over the spices.

In English:

Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe,
creator of different types of spices. (Response: Amen)

In Hebrew:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא מִיְי בְּשָׁמִם

Transliteration of the Hebrew:

Ba-ruch a-tah A-do-nai, E-lo-hei-nu me-lech ha-olam,
bo-rei mee-nei ve-sah-meem. (Response: "Amen")

Blessing Over the Candle

By lighting the havdalah candle, we remember that light was the first thing created by our God and that the Sabbath is over, and we begin our work, our "creating." Lighting the candle represents our first act or work of the week, as many don't light candles on the Sabbath due to Exodus 35:3.

In English:

Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe,
creator of the light of the fire. (Response: Amen)

In Hebrew:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא מְאוֹרֵי הָאֵשׁ

Transliteration of the Hebrew:

Ba-ruch a-tah A-do-nai, E-lo-hei-nu me-lech ha-olam,
bo-rei meh-or-ee ha-esh. (Response: "Amen")

The Blessing of Separation

The final blessing brings it all together. The reason for Havdalah is to distinguish the sacred from the common, the holy from the unholy. It states that the holy Shabbat has now ended, and the work week has begun. This blessing praises God for separating. While this may seem strange, think of all the separating God does. He separated light from darkness, the waters from the heavens, the seas from dry land, the Sabbath from the rest of the week, His people from among the nations, etc.

In the command to keep the Sabbath, we're to keep it holy. This means we're to set it apart from the rest of the days of the week. Havdalah is one way to keep the Sabbath holy - we're deliberately separating it from the other days of the week. Here's the blessing over separation, called the Hamavdil.

In English:

Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, who distinguishes between the holy and the profane, light and darkness, between Israel and the nations, between the seventh day and the six days of work. Blessed are you, Lord, who separates between the holy and the profane. (Response: Amen)

In Hebrew:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם הַמְבָדִיל בֵּין קֹדֶשׁ לְחֹל
בֵּין אֹר לְחֹשֶׁךְ, בֵּין יִשְׂרָאֵל לְאֻמִּים, בֵּין יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי לְשֵׁשֶׁת יָמֵי הַמַּעֲשֵׂה,
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה הַמְבָדִיל בֵּין קֹדֶשׁ לְחֹל

Transliteration of the Hebrew:

Ba-ruch a-tah A-do-nai, E-lo-hei-nu me-lech ha-olam, ha-mahv-dil ben ko-desh leh-chol,
ben or leh-cho-shech ben yees-ra-el la-a-meem ben yom hash-vee-ee leh-sheh-sheht yeh-
mei ha-mah-ah-seh. Ba-ruch a-tah A-do-nai ha-mahv-dil ben ko-desh leh-chol.
(Response: "Amen")

The End of the Shabbat

After the blessings, take a drink of the wine. The havdalah candle is then extinguished in the wine that overflowed from the cup, symbolizing that the Shabbat is now over. Everyone can now wish each other a "Shavua Tov" – a good week!