Havdalah

If you are a dreamer, come in,
If you are a dreamer, a wisher, a hoper,
    A laugh, a magic bean buyer.
If you’re a pretender, come sit by the fire
    For we have some tales to spin,
    Come in, come in!

Shel Silverstein
This evening we step away from our daily routines. We allow ourselves time and space to reflect.

We ask, “Where have we been? Where are we going?”

At other times, and in other places, we may feel fragile and alone.

Tonight we join together like the braids of our candles, to find personal strength and to join with this community.

Each of us is a dreamer. We dream of peace and of justice. This evening, we renew our commitments to work toward a just and peaceful world.

By three things is the world sustained: by truth, by justice and by peace.

Each of us is a realist. We might wish to do great things, but it is sufficient to do what we can do.

You are not required to complete the work, but neither are you at liberty to abstain from it.

Hillel said, Do not separate yourself from the community.

The light from the menorah is stronger and steadier than any single flame.

We came together tonight to create a special time, separate from what came before and what is yet to come.

We came together tonight to provide light and warmth for each other.

Song: Hinay ma tov

Hin-nay ma tov oo-may-na-eem
She-vet a-kheem gam ya-khad

Havdalah separates the last week from the next. It reminds us of many other separations: rest from activity, light from darkness. It symbolizes the enduring and
fundamental differences in the world. We celebrate the moral distinctions that guide our actions and the richness and beauty of our individual differences. We grieve over the economic distinctions that create pain and want, the social distinctions that set people against people.

To each person, in each generation, there is the challenge to dispel the darkness of ignorance, of hatred and of greed. By our individual deeds and by our traditions we combine the wisdom of the past with the wisdom of the present. The Havdalah candle reminds us how our individual lights combine. As Jews all over the world celebrate Havdalah we create a beacon of truth so bright searing that only peace and justice will remain.

The Havdalah candle is lit from the shamas

Radiant is the light in the unity of all people. We rejoice in our heritage which has given us the tradition of lighting the Havdalah candle.

Mir freyen zikh mit undzer yerusheh vos hot undz gegeben di traditsiye foon ontsindn a Havdalah likht.

Na’eh ha-or ba-achdut ha-enoshi-ut.
**Song: Shu’vah shuv**

Return again, return again  
Return to the land of your soul.

Return to whom you are  
Return to what you are  
Return to where you are  
Return and return again.

Shu’vah shuv, shu’vah shuv  
Shu’vah shuv le’eretz naf sh’khah

Shu’vah l’atz m’khah,  
Shu’vah l’ma-tzav-khah  
Shu’vah la ma-kom sh’ah  
Ta shom shu’vah shuv.

**Although** the beginning of the Sabbath is a time of joy, the Havdalah is not a time for sadness. It is not an end, only a return to the beginning. The weekly cycle commences, and we start on another week, reliving the six days of creation. Although some Jews have lived in poverty and exile, as others have enjoyed wealth and power, all celebrated the fruits of labor and the fruits of study, as we do, as essential components of a good life. We know that past practices and beliefs were not always as we would wish them. Sisters were rarely accorded the rights and obligations of brothers. Brothers were offered few choices. Children were not always taught to understand, or to think for themselves. We choose not to follow traditions we cannot agree with, but to take the best from our history as the foundation on which we build the future.

There are other traditions that we may recall. Some peoples would hold up their hands to the candles so as to see the flames reflected on the nails. Others would cup their hands, observing the shadows cast by the fingers on the palms, to see the difference between shadow and light.

**In** Morocco, Jews would look at their reflections in the wine and laugh, so that the week would be filled with joy. Others might fill the wine cups to overflowing, as a symbol of the hoped for blessings of the week to come. In some traditions a bit of wine is dabbed in the pockets, or on the eyelids, hoping for health and prosperity and as a way to carry the Sabbath into the new week.

The old traditions we follow, the ones we have created for our own times, and the ones that we may not yet realize that we are developing, which will only be traditions to those
who follow us, are all strands in the story of the Jewish people. As each candle’s wick burns alone as part of one candle, we rejoice in our individuality and in our place in history and future of the Jewish people.

The goblet is filled and the cups are distributed.

The fruit of the vine is sweet. During the week to come we will remember its sweetness, and offer to others all that is good and sweet in ourselves.

V’yayeen y’sa-mach l’vav ey-nosh
And wine shall gladden the heart

Let us bless the source of life
That ripens fruit on the vine
As we hallow the week,
Calling to mind our history

Marcia Falk
All sip the wine

L’chaim
To life

Silent meditation

Laugh, laugh at all my dreams
But this I the dreamer proclaim
That I believe in man
That I believe in you

Shaul Tchernikhovsky

Our Havdalah service is especially beautiful because it speaks to us through our senses. We began with the warmth of the candle and shared the sweetness of the wine. And now we enjoy the fragrance of the spices. In the words of an unidentified medieval poet:

Fragrant thy memories, O sweet Sabbath day,
Fragrant as incense, never to fade away
The wandering dove doth find her nest
In thee, the toilers cease their weary quest.

As you inhale the aroma notice how the different fragrances enrich each other. We also, as friends and members of a congregation, enrich each other. Let your senses expand to summon the memories of what has been sweet and good in the week just past, and of the many people whom you cherish and who cherish you.

Pass the spice box
The history of the Jewish people is a rich one. As part of our developing Havdalah tradition we’ll hear the story of one event or idea from that history.

A story is told.

[Reader]

Not because of victories
I sing,
having none,
but for the common sunshine,
the breeze,
the largess of the spring.

Not for victory
But for the day’s work done
As well as I was able;
Not for a seat upon the dais
But at the common table.

Charles Reznikoff

Song: Ayfo Oree

Ay-fo oree? O-Ree Bee
Ay-fo tikva-tee ? Tikva-tee bee.
Where is my light? My light is in me.
Where is my hope? My hope is in me.

Ay-fo ko-khee? Ko-khee bee?
Where is my strength? My strength is in me.

V’gam bakh.
And in you.

Rabbi Sherwin Wine
To conclude the Sabbath, it is traditional to extinguish the flame of the Havdalah candle in the wine. By doing so, we re-establish our covenant to seek wisdom, to share love, and to bring about peace.

*The flame is tipped over the bowl and wine is poured over it.*

**Shavuah Tov! A gute voch. A good week!**

*All join hands and sing together*

**Song: Havaynu Shalom Aleichem**

Ha-vay-nu sha-lom a-lay-khem
Ha-vay-nu sha-lom a-lay-khem
Ha-vay-nu sha-lom a-lay-khem
Ha-vay-nu sha-lom sha-lom sha-lom a-lay-khem