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Jewish Holidays in a JIFF

The fast and easy way to Cut the ConfUSION!



Havdalah...

The Ending That's also a Beginning!

Parting is such sweet sorrow -- at least when it comes to Havdalah (hav-doll-ah), a weekly Jewish ritual that's all about the idea of separation -- a separation from Shabbat (the Jewish Sabbath) and the rest of the week, and in some people's minds, a separation from the holy to the ordinary. Havdalah is Hebrew for the word separation, and is a short, simple and spiritual ceremony that takes place in the home. It is traditionally performed after sundown when the sky is dark, and is a fun way, especially for children, to bid goodbye to Shabbat and welcome the new week. So whether you do it once a week, or just once in awhile, having a Havdalah ceremony is a great way to build a new tradition together. Learn how to perform a Havdalah ceremony in your home and get a free download of Debbie Friedman singing a beautiful version of the Havdalah prayers that you can follow along with at home.

What you'll need:

Something to Drink . ideally wine or juice, but anything will do. Pour a generous amount into a wine cup or any glass or cup.

Fragrant Spices . typically people use a mixture of cloves, cinnamon and bay leaves, but a potpourri sachet, your own spice mix or even some fresh fruit will do the trick. Decorative Havdalah spice boxes can be found online or at most Jewish gift shops. Or you can just use a simple dish, loosely woven bag or any container which will allow the fragrance to escape.

A Candle . preferably one with more than one wick. Traditional braided Havdalah candles can be ordered online or at most Jewish gift shops. However, you can hold two one-wicked candles together, or just use any one-wicked candle that you have handy.

Here's How:

The following is the traditional way that most people perform the Havdalah ritual. However, you should feel free to say your own prayers and make it your own in any way that feels meaningful and comfortable to you. Many people enjoy having this ceremony in a darkened space, or even outdoors where the light of the candle creates an extra special mood. You can listen to a partial track of Debbie Friedman's *Birchot Havdalah* by googling *Debbi Friedman's Birkot Havdalah* download and use it to follow along with the transliterations below:

1. Say the blessing over the wine or other beverage and then have everyone drink from one main cup or individual cups:

Barukh atah Adonai, Eloheinu, melekh ha'olam
Blessed are you, God, sovereign of the universe

borei p'ri hagafen (Amen)
Who creates the fruit of the vine (Amen)

2. Say the blessing over the spices and then pass them around so everyone can smell them. The spices are smelled to help carry the sweetness of Shabbat into the rest of the week+

Barukh atah Adonai, Eloheinu, melekh ha'olam, borei minei v'samim (Amen)

Blessed are you, God, sovereign of the universe, Who creates varieties of spices (Amen)

3. Light the candle, then after saying the blessing ask everyone to hold their hands up to the light. This represents the first light of creation, renewed energy for the upcoming week and new beginnings. Lighting a flame is also a way of marking the end of Shabbat just as it is in marking the beginning.

Barukh atah Adonai, Eloheinu, melekh ha'olam
Blessed are you, God, sovereign of the universe

borei m'orei ha'eish (Amein)
Who creates the light of the fire (Amen)

4. Finally, say the following blessing. Once completed, it is traditional to turn the candle upside down and extinguish it in the glass of wine:

Blessed are you, God, sovereign of the universe
Who separates between sacred and secular
between light and darkness, between Israel and the nations
between the seventh day and the six days of labor
Blessed are You, Lord, who separates between sacred and secular.
(Amen)

