

Havdalah: The Ritual of Separation for Life's Moments of Transition

Evan Sheinhait

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Advisor: Rabbi Nancy H. Wiener, D.Min.

Summary

This capstone developed out of two questions: 1) How did the ritual of Havdalah develop? and 2) What are the meanings embedded within Havdalah that made it widely practiced, even by those who do not practice Jewish rituals at large? The research uses both classical rabbinic works and secondary works related to the nature of rituals, themes within Havdalah, and contemporary liminal moments of transition. Through my research of the historical and theological developments of this ritual, I sought to create new rituals inspired by Havdalah to mark contemporary moments of transition that have yet to be ritualized. This project focuses on two of those moments: retirement and the departure from an organized trip to Israel. The goals of this project were to take a deep dive into the development of a ritual and then create usable rituals for the contemporary Jewish context.

The project below is divided in three chapters. The first chapter, “Havdalah: A History and Meaning,” outlines the development of the ritual of Havdalah and the thematic trends present within. The second chapter, “A New Transition in the Life Cycle: Retirement,” explores the rationale for using an Havdalah inspired ceremony for a retirement ritual and offers a ritual with a detailed explanation of its elements. The third and final chapter, “Physical Transitions: יציאת הארץ - Departure from Israel,” considers the use of a Havdalah inspired ritual at the conclusion of a short term trip to the Land of Israel. Like the previous chapter, it offers a ritual and a detailed explanation of its elements.

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Chapter 1: Havdalah: Evolution, Meanings, and Contemporary Possibilities

Havdalah: History and Meanings

“Judaism is a *religion of time* aiming at the *sanctification of time*.”¹ These words by Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel frame Judaism and Jewish ritual in a system of time. The rituals of Shabbat best exemplify Heschel’s understanding because they create distinctions between holy and mundane time. The seventh day of creation stands apart from all the other days of the week through its designation as holy time.² Shabbat, as described in Genesis, is a time when Jews emulate God through rest.³ Due to a heightened sense of holiness, humans abstain from various types of ‘work.’ From the glory and spiritual height that comes with Shabbat, a drastic spiritual downfall occurs when Shabbat ends and the mundane⁴ week begins. This liminal period inspired the rabbis to create a ritual to guide Jews through the transition. That ritual is the ritual of Havdalah.

Literally translated as ‘separation,’ Havdalah occurs twenty-five hours after the start of Shabbat. Rabbi Lawrence Hoffman explains Havdalah as a ritual of categorization since the Jewish concept of time and space is based on regular demarcations between different dualities.⁵ Havdalah separates and demarcates the seventh day from the rest of the week. Rituals help us categorize the world because

¹Abraham Joshua Heschel, *The Sabbath: Its Meaning for Modern Man*. (New York, NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005), 8.

² See Gen 2:3.

³ The Hebrew root ש.ב.ת. is understood in terms of rest.

⁴ The word most often referred to the week besides Shabbat is חול, meaning mundane or regular, opposing the connotations of קודש, holy or designated time.

⁵ Lawrence A. Hoffman, *Beyond the Text: A Holistic Approach to Liturgy*. “Havdalah: A Case of Categories.” (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), 20-45.

“every category pulls us away from the shifting and complex experience of reality. Every category thus leaves an ambiguous zone at its edges.”⁶ Havdalah, the moment when Shabbat and the week intersect, “is celebrated precisely at that point in time when the categories threaten to break down, when the Sabbath is about to fade into weekday secularity, and light is becoming dark.”⁷ The separations mentioned in the ritual of Havdalah, related to people and time, organize the chaos caused by the blurring of holy and mundane time. Havdalah, as a ritual, inhabits the liminal space between the holiness of Shabbat and the mundanity of the week, allowing for a seamless transition between different levels of spiritual holiness. The organization and ritualization Havdalah offers has resulted in this ritual becoming a standard practice within the Jewish rite, even in communities that do not practice many other Jewish rituals.

Havdalah is not a biblically prescribed ritual. It is, therefore, a challenge to study its development. The authors of the Mishnah recognized four types of liturgical statements established by The Great Assembly: *brahot* (“blessings”), *tefilot* (“prayers”), *qedushot* (“sanctifications”), and *havdalot* (“separations”).⁸ Linking the origin of these modes to The Great Assembly roots liturgical separations within an ancient tradition. Despite familiarity with the concept of liturgical separations, the *Tana'im* gave the ritual

⁶ Adam B. Seligman and Robert P. Weller. *Rethinking Pluralism: Ritual, Experience, and Ambiguity*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 4.

⁷ Hoffman, *Beyond the Text*, 22

⁸ Bavli Berakhot 33a - אמר ליה רב שמן בר אבא לרבי יוחנן מכדי אנשי כנסת הגדולה תקנו להם - לישראל ברכות ותפלות קדושות והבדלות

Rav Shemen, Shimon, bar Abba said to Rabbi Yoḥanan: Now, since the eighteen blessings of the Amidah prayer and the other prayer formulas for prayer were instituted for Israel by the members of the Great Assembly just like all the other blessings and prayers, sanctifications and havdalot

of Havdalah sparse attention. Eventually, blessings became the preferred prose of rabbinic liturgy and the other three modes were restyled to conform to the structure of blessings.⁹

A strong focus on Havdalah appears in the rabbinic works of the Medieval period. In their discussions of Havdalah, the *Rishonim* rely heavily on biblical prooftexts to support their arguments. But these comments do not provide an urtext. They support the ritual as it was known at the time rather than defining its point of inception.¹⁰ Therefore, only by piecing together references from the early rabbinic, Talmudic, and medieval commentaries can we possibly discern the intention behind the creation of Havdalah.

What adds to the challenge of dating Havdalah is the existence of two versions of how the ritual of Havdalah could be practiced. There are also multiple variations among Havdalah ceremonies, including those related to distinctions determined by the calendar. Lewis Bogage considers the variability of the Havdalah ceremony as the representation of “a progressive evolution. Each stage of its development evolved as an answer to the needs of the people.”¹¹ With no known urtext, Havdalah becomes a ritual layered with meanings and interpretations that become essential and inseparable. Three major themes emerge within Havdalah: (1) separation, (2) the centrality of the creation narrative, and (3) salvation and redemption. These major themes connect the multiple components of Havdalah into one cohesive ritual. Havdalah also clearly resembles the opening rituals of

⁹ Hoffman, *Beyond the Text*, 30-1

¹⁰ Alan J. Katz, "The Havdalah Ceremony: Its Development As a Prayer for Salvation." (Rabbinic Thesis, H.U.C.-J.I.R., New York, 1976), 9

¹¹ Lewis Eugene Bogage, "The Havdalah Ceremony : A Study of Its Meaning Its Customs and Its Objects Throughout the Ages." (Rabbinic Thesis, H.U.C.-J.I.R., New York, 1963.) 82

Shabbat, bracketing the day with corresponding rites. As Havdalah developed through time, new interpretations of these core themes arose, reinforcing the ritual as a timeless requisite of Jewish worship.

Havdalah in tefilah versus al hakos

Havdalah, as mentioned above, provides a transition between holy and secular time. These transitional moments occur in the Jewish calendar at the conclusions of Shabbat and holidays, as the regular status of the week begins. The most regular instance, and the focus of this project, occurs between Shabbat and the week. In Jewish tradition, there are two ways to perform the Shabbat Havdalah - through the recitation of a blessing and through the performance of a ritual. The differences between the two *havdalot* lie in their performance. The blessing and the ritual serve the same purpose: to acknowledge the distinction between times of sacredness and times of mundaneness.

The blessing of Havdalah occurs as a special insertion within *Ma'ariv*, the evening service, following the conclusion of Shabbat. Jewish time is based upon the soli-lunar calendar. Days begin with the setting of the sun and the rising of the moon. Within the structure of the three daily times of prayer, *Ma'ariv* is the first designated time of prayer in a Jewish day. Thus, *Ma'ariv* after Shabbat is the first prayer service of the week. Also the words of Jewish liturgy adapt to the calendar. The wording of the weekday liturgy changes as Shabbat comes in on Friday night. On Shabbat, requests for God to perform work are removed and replaced with references to God's resting on Shabbat. After Shabbat ends, the liturgy returns to the regular weekday pattern. *Ma'ariv*, as a whole, maintains a fixed wording regardless of the day. When Shabbat or a festival

ends, a noticeable change occurs in the fourth blessing of the weekday *Amidah*, “One who grants wisdom” (See Appendix A). There, a blessing of formal separation between Shabbat or a holiday and the week is inserted into this first unique blessing recited during the week, but not on Shabbat.¹² Like an announcement, the worshipper praises God for the separation of time. This Havdalah focuses on the theme of wisdom, emphasizing the human ability to perceive and categorize time.¹³ Functionally, this havdalah moment became a marker to the worshippers that Shabbat had ended.

The second form of Havdalah is a formal ritual named *havdalah al hakos*, separation over the cup. This ceremony occurs in the intimacy of the home. It has four blessings as its main components (discussed in detail below). Its name derives from the first blessing, which is recited over a cup of wine. The ceremony also includes blessings for spices, a candle, and a special blessing of havdalah, separation. The blessings are surrounded by quotations from scripture and liturgical hymns. *Havdalah al hakos* stands on its own, a service apart from *tefillah* (though it can happen immediately after the conclusion of *Ma’ariv*). For the purpose of this project, the focus will be on *havdalah al hakos*.

Two Distinct Ways to Mark the End of Shabbat

So why are there two different ceremonies that serve the same purpose? The Babylonian Talmud, in Berachot 33a, explains:

בתחילה קבעוה בתפלה העשירו קבעוה על הכוס הענו חזרו וקבעוה בתפלה והם אמרו המבדיל בתפלה צריך שיבדיל על הכוס¹⁴

¹² Bavli Berachot 33a

¹³ Adiel Kadari, “Narrative and Normative: Havdalah in Pirkei de-Rabbi Eliezer” *Jewish Studies Quarterly* 21 no. 2, (June 2014), 150

¹⁴ Bavli Berachot 33a

Initially (during the early years of the Second Temple) they established that Havdalah is to be recited in the *Amidah* prayer. Subsequently, when the people became wealthy, they established that Havdalah is to be recited over the cup of wine. When the people became impoverished, they again established that it was to be recited in the *Amidah* prayer. And they said: One who recites Havdalah in the *Amidah* prayer must recite Havdalah over the cup of wine as well.¹⁵

During hard economic times, Havdalah was said as part of the communal *Ma'ariv Amidah* on Saturday night in order to ease the burden of acquiring the elements necessary to perform the ritual of *Havdalah al hakos* by the individual. Yet when economic times allowed for it, individuals wanted to distinguish the end of Shabbat with their own supplies. People found personal meaning in the individual performance of Havdalah, and as with other home rituals, they took on the responsibility of performing this ritual, distinguishing between Shabbat and the week. Bavli Berachot teaches that the early rabbis knew of both *havdalot* and understood them to be interchangeable rituals that had been widely accepted by the population at large.

So if there are two ways of performing Havdalah, which one is more important? Or in other words, which one becomes the official marker that separates Shabbat from the week? Talmudic sources bend over backward to support both ceremonies because both have grounding in tradition and practicality. The Talmud concludes its debate over the two rituals by stating:

אמר ליה רבינא לרבא הלכתא מאי אמר ליה כי קידוש מה קידוש אף על גב דמקדש בצלותא
מקדש אכסא אף הבדלה נמי אף על גב דמבדיל בצלותא מבדיל אכסא:

Ravina said to Rava: What is the halakha? Rava said to him: The halakha in the case of Havdalah is like the halakha in the case of *Kiddush*. Just as in the case of *Kiddush*, although one recited *Kiddush* in the *Amidah* prayer

¹⁵ All rabbinic source translations adapted from sefaria.org unless otherwise noted

they must, nevertheless, recite *Kiddush* again over the cup of wine, so too with Havdalah. Although one recited Havdalah in the Amidah prayer they must recite Havdalah again over the cup of wine.¹⁶

Both rites halakhically (according to Jewish law) became mandatory, and the rabbis determined that one is praiseworthy for performing both *havdalot*. Ultimately though, one has not marked the end of Shabbat unless one has performed Havdalah over a glass of wine. The rabbis conclude that the ritual of *havdalah al hakos* distinguishes between Shabbat and the week; the havdalah blessing as part of the evening communal prayers becomes a supplementary invocation that has no effect on separating time.

Elements of Havdalah al hakos

Preamble. Havdalah begins with a preamble which sets the stage for the performance of the ritual. A series of biblical verses, which come from the later books of the Tanakh, mostly Isaiah and Psalms, lay the groundwork, referencing themes that appear later in the ritual. The use of biblical verses to begin a ritual is modeled after Geonic practices, disclosing a late origin for this component.¹⁷ Throughout the Medieval Period, the rabbis attributed mystical and magical properties to this section. For some, the verses in the preamble became a pseudo-amulet which were “thought to protect against the evil eye and were recited to ward off all manners of the demonic.”¹⁸ Moses Isserles in his glosses to the *Shulkhan Arukh* agreed that the preamble acted as a sign of goodness and

¹⁶ Bavli Berachot 33b

¹⁷ Hoffman, *Beyond the Text*, 23

¹⁸ Barbara Thide, “For Just Such a Time as This: Esther, Havdalah, and Mazal-Making Magic” in *Havdalah*. ed. David Birnbaum and Martin S. Cohen. (New York: New Paradigm Matrix Publishing 2017), 70

blessing.¹⁹ Interestingly, these verses do not speak to themes of Shabbat nor separation. Rather, they heighten the mystical qualities of Havdalah as a ritual which acts as a prayer for protection and peace.²⁰ Many modern scholars determined that the preamble was not as critical as the blessings, and that it was introduced due to supernatural assumptions.²¹ Nonetheless, the preamble exists as a fixed and integral portion of Havdalah.

The form of the preamble varies over time and by rite. Ashkenazi, Sephardi, and Mizrahi communities developed this section independently in the period between the redaction of the Talmud and the acceptance of the authority of the *Shulkhan Arukh* (See Appendices B and D). The majority of the verses speak of redemptive subjects, specifically God as redeemer and the anticipated messianic era. In fact, two verses are universally accepted: Esther 8:16 and Psalm 116:13. In the Ashkenazic rite, these two verses close this section. In the Sephardic rite, in addition to the quotation from Psalms, the verse from Esther appears twice, near the beginning and the end. Both of these verses reference the ritual objects that will come later in the ceremony, the candle and the wine respectively. For example, Psalm 116 speaks of the metaphoric cup of God's blessings, which the worshipper carries into this ritual.²² Both these verses direct the practitioner into contemplation of the greater themes and purpose of Havdalah and set the stage for the upcoming blessings. The thematic messages of salvation and redemption clearly

¹⁹ Shulkhan Arukh Orach Hayyim 296:1 - ונהגו לומר קודם הבדלה שעושים בבית הנה אל ישועתי - It is customary to say, before doing Havdalah at home, the following verses: God is my redeemer....

²⁰ Katz, "The Havdalah Ceremony," 31-40

²¹ Hoffman, *Beyond the Text*, 27

²² Zvi A. Yehuda, "The Ritual and the Concept of *Havdalah*" *Judaism* 43 ,no 1, (Winter 94), 80

connect all of the chosen verses as well. Elliot Dorff suggests that the collapsing of moments of time into each other creates a sense of fear, and that mentioning “the name of God that bespeaks God’s power” provides protection and a sense of security.²³ The preamble thus sets the scene not only thematically with a cry for deliverance but also beautifully introduces the main section of the ritual: the four blessings of Havdalah.

Wine. Wine is an integral element of most joyous Jewish celebrations, from *Pesach seders* to weddings to *brit milah* celebrations. Wine helps to sanctify the moment and adds joy, as Psalm 104 expresses.²⁴ According to the Talmud, drinking wine assists in contemplation of the Divine and its use brings upon blessing to the entire household.²⁵ Rabbinic attitudes towards wine are overwhelmingly positive and in transitional moments, wine becomes the symbol of a spiritual elevation or diminution.

In Mishnah Berakhot 8:1, wine is associated with time. Shammai and Hillel debate over the order of the blessings found within the *Kiddush* on Friday night. Hillel’s argument triumphs, decreeing *מְבָרֵךְ עַל הַיַּיִן וְאַחֵר כֶּךָ מְבָרֵךְ עַל הַיּוֹם* (“First bless the wine and afterward bless the day”). Hillel grounds his argument upon the concept that there are two ways to mark time: by natural lunar rotations and through blessing ritual objects.²⁶ Therefore, blessing the wine first signals the overriding importance of the cup as a marker of transitional moments. However, the sages of the Talmud are clear that while

²³ Elliot N. Dorff, “Havdalah: Distinctions That Provide Identity and Meaning” in *Havdalah*. ed. David Birnbaum and Martin S. Cohen. (New York: New Paradigm Matrix Publishing 2017), 32

²⁴ Psalm 104:15 - *וַיִּין יִשְׂמַח לִבְב־אֲנוּשׁ לְהַצְהִיל פָּנִים מִשְׁמֵן וְלֶחֶם לִבְב־אֲנוּשׁ יִסְעֵד* : / wine that cheers the hearts of men oil that makes the face shine, and bread that sustains man’s life.

²⁵ Bavli Eruvin 65a-b

²⁶ See Rashi on Bavli Berakhot 51b - *וכבר קדש היום - משקבלו עליו או מצאת הכוכבים* :

wine heralds changes in types of time, the blessing of the wine is not the official moment of change; that moment occurs in another blessing which explicitly states the temporal transition.²⁷ Therefore, wine becomes a symbol within a larger ritual that marks liminal moments.

While wine is the preferred liquid, it is not the only option for this blessing. If wine is unavailable, another form of drink can be used if that drink is popular in the place where the ritual takes place.²⁸ Havdalah intends to increase joy and should not be a burden for the participants. Just as the Talmud describes the need for two ceremonies based upon the economic situation of the Jewish community, money and accessibility never hinder the ability to perform Havdalah. The *Shulkhan Arukh* decided that if the worshipper does not have enough wine for both the *Kiddush* of Shabbat and Havdalah, one should save it for Havdalah, performing Friday night *Kiddush* over bread instead.²⁹ This perspective demonstrates the importance not only of *Havdalah al hakos*, but also the fact that the cup of wine in Havdalah becomes an identifiable symbol of the liminal transition between the close of Shabbat and the new week. The cup, *hakos*, becomes the namesake for this ritual.

Spices. The second benediction of Havdalah blesses spices. The rabbinic olfactory ritual of spices as part of the Havdalah ritual builds upon common rituals of the biblical world. A key component of service in the Temple in Jerusalem were *בסמים* (*b'samim*), probably a product similar to incense, that would be burned in devotion to YHWH.³⁰ The Book of

²⁷ Bavli Shabbat 150b

²⁸ Shulkhan Arukh Orach Hayyim 296:2

²⁹ Shulkhan Arukh Orach Hayyim 296:4

³⁰ Exodus 25:6; 35:8; I Kings 10:2,10; II Kings 20:13

Esther refers to *b'smaim* as a sweet smelling-product used like a perfume by women in the courting ritual to make themselves attractive.³¹ Spices were also related to messianic theology as seen in the gifts to Jesus by the three kings in the Gospels.³²

Clearly, biblical precedent connects spices as a conventional element within rituals. Since spices were such a common ritual object, the spices used must be designated for Havdalah only. Beit Hillel and Beit Shammai surprisingly agree that spices belonging to a Gentile, idolater, or those used during a funerary ritual should not be blessed during Havdalah.³³ The purpose of Havdalah, as the Rambam later explains, was to separate Jews from other cultures.³⁴ If spices were used for another ritual purpose, other spices must be procured for Havdalah to be completed.³⁵ This stance becomes a key descriptor for halakhic classification of spices acceptable for use for Havdalah.

After the destruction of the Second Temple, the rabbinic classification of 'spice' evolved and broadened. Myrtle was a common biblical and Second Temple Period ritual object that was used in the Temple cult, especially around Sukkot. At the time when the rabbis created a blessing connected to a variety of scents, myrtle was a common smell that the Talmud specifically mentions in connection with that blessings.³⁶

Simultaneously, in the non-rabbinic world, mystical properties became associated with

³¹ Esther 2:12

³² Matthew 2:11

³³ Mishnah Berakhot 8:6

³⁴ Mishneh Torah Shabbat 29:25 - He widens and extends this ruling to the wine and the candle as well

³⁵ Shulkhan Arukh Orach Hayyim 297:2

³⁶ Bavli Berakhot 43a-b

myrtle.³⁷ In order to combat those non-rabbinic beliefs, myrtle was shifted to be only one of a variety of spices acceptable for Havdalah. By the seventeenth century, many different pleasant smelling objects were fulfilling the obligation of having spices at Havdalah.³⁸ It became customary to use indigenous or popular spices.

The origins of this ritual connected to myrtle are still evident in the Hebrew word for the spice box which holds the spices, called הדס (*hadas*).³⁹ The spice box was first mentioned by Ephraim ben Isaac of Regensburg, a twelfth-century Tosafist, who explained that the blessing of Havdalah spices should be performed over spices held in a glass receptacle.⁴⁰ By the fifteenth century, the practice of using a spice box to hold the spices was the accepted rite across the Jewish world, from Germany to Persia.⁴¹ The box took on many forms, just like the spices. Despite rabbinic attempts to disassociate Jewish rituals from it, myrtle was kept as an exemplary symbol of rabbinic olfactory rituals.⁴² Once the blessing is recited, the spices are passed around in order for the participants to smell them, fulfilling the action of the blessing.⁴³

Candle. The lighting of the Havdalah candle officially signifies the end of Shabbat.

Lighting fire is prohibited on Shabbat so halakhah requires that three stars have appeared in the sky before lighting the candle (see more below). The lighting of the candle initiates

³⁷ Jacob Zallel Lauterbach, “The Origin and Development of Two Sabbath Ceremonies.” *Hebrew Union College Annual*, Vol. 15 (1940), 16

³⁸ See also note of Shulkhan Arukh Orach Hayyim 297:4

³⁹ The Hebrew word for myrtle

⁴⁰ *Encyclopaedia Judaica*. 2nd ed. Volume 8 (2007) s.v. “Havdalah - Hadas” (Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA in Association with the Keter Pub. House), 468

⁴¹ *Ibid*

⁴² See Tur Orach Hayyim 297

⁴³ See Shulkhan Arukh Orach Hayyim 297:4

the ritual but the candle is the third object blessed in the ritual of Havdalah. Kindling lights to mark holy spaces and times has been an accepted Jewish practice since the First Temple period.⁴⁴ Unlike other ritual candles which are intended to burn out completely, the Havdalah candle is lit only temporarily.

The braided appearance is a unique characteristic of the Havdalah candle. The reason for the distinctive shape originates in a debate over the wording of the blessing over the candle. The Mishnah records a disagreement between an early pair of rabbis, Hillel and Shammai:

בֵּית שַׁמַּי אֹמְרִים, שֶׁבְּרָא מְאֹר הָאֵשׁ. וּבֵית הִלֵּל אֹמְרִים, בּוֹרָא מְאֹרֵי הָאֵשׁ

Beit Shammai says: “Who created the light of fire.” and Beit Hillel says: “Creator of the lights of fire.”⁴⁵

The disagreement here centers on how one should view fire and what the essential components of fire are. Shammai sees fire as one whole entity, using the singular word ‘light’ to describe it. Hillel disagrees and defines fire as a collection of components (i.e. white flames, yellow flames, blue flames), and uses the plural word ‘lights’ to describe fire. The debate concludes by confirming Hillel’s position that fire has many components and later rabbis offer a torch (אֲבוּקָה) as the exemplary tool for this purpose.⁴⁶ The braided candle becomes synonymous with a torch in Isserles’ commentary on the *Shulkhan Arukh* where he defines a torch as an instrument with a minimum of two wicks.⁴⁷ Mystical traditions enhance this interpretation by ascribing the sefirotic system to the candle. The

⁴⁴ Ismar Schorsch, “Why Jews Light Candles.” Jewish Theological Seminary. February 19, 2005 <http://www.jtsa.edu/why-jews-light-candles>

⁴⁵ Mishnah Berakhot 8:5

⁴⁶ Bavli Pesachim 8a

⁴⁷ Shulkhan Arukh Orach Hayyim 298:2

braided candle represents “the singular flame of the Shekhinah, which is the light of the Sabbath and representative of the light of the *s’firot* [emanations of the Divine].”⁴⁸ The braided candle for Havdalah is a physical validation of Hillel’s position, as explained by Isserles; the candle must have many wicks that truly represent the many flames within the fire.

Blessing of Separation. The final blessing of *Havdalah al hakos* is the blessing of separation. Despite the clear understanding that the word להבדיל means to separate, “in no place does the Torah ever use the term *Havdalah* for *Shabbat*. Nonetheless, the Sages do. They perceived the Torah’s terms, ‘Blessed’ and ‘Hallowed,’ to indicate separation and distinction.”⁴⁹ Therefore, this blessing explicitly states the intention of להבדיל, to formally distinguish between moments of time. It is tempting, the rabbis argue, to believe that Kiddush would mark the end of Shabbat because it is the first blessing recited (see more above). However, the Talmud rules:

אמרין הכי המבדיל בין קודש לחול ועבדין צורכין

We say this (at the end of Shabbat): “The One who distinguishes between the sacred and the mundane” and then we attend to our needs.⁵⁰

The Gemara states that Shabbat officially ends not over a cup of wine, but over a blessing of separation, the moment when work can resume. The *Shulkhan Arukh* upholds the prohibition of work on Shabbat until the moment one recites the blessing of separation.⁵¹

⁴⁸ Orna Triguboff, “Havdalah, the Lights of the Fire, Accepting the Secular and the Holy” in *Havdalah*. ed. David Birnbaum and Martin S. Cohen. (New York: New Paradigm Matrix Publishing, 2017), 141

⁴⁹ Yehuda, “The Ritual and the Concept of *Havdalah*,” 79

⁵⁰ Bavli Shabbat 150b

⁵¹ Shulkhan Arukh Orach Hayyim 299:10

Therefore with the recitation of the blessing of separation, the worshipper formally leaves sacred time and crosses into mundane time.

Four distinct separations construct this blessing: the distinction between (1) holy and mundane times, (2) light and darkness, (3) Israel and the nations, and (4) Shabbat and the six days of creation. It might seem redundant or unnecessary to mention so many distinctions. Indeed, the Talmud sees fit to place limits on what can be included in this final blessing.⁵² A talmudic discussion in *Bavli Pesachim* offers many alternative separations that the havdalah blessing could mention (see Appendix E). Two mandatory qualifications derive from this exchange. First, the havdalah blessing can have no fewer than three and no more than seven distinctions. Secondly, all distinctions must be stated in the Torah.⁵³ Despite the Talmudic decision, by the time of Maimonides, the standard blessing only included the four distinctions used today.⁵⁴ Elie Kaunfer notes that the seven distinctions discussed in the Talmud collapse into three categories: distinctions among humans, distinctions among natural phenomena and Creation, and distinctions in ritual.⁵⁵ Respectively, these categories correlate to distinctions between Israel and the nations, light and dark, and holy and mundane times. The fourth distinction mentions the obvious, separation between Shabbat and the week. These four distinctions, and only these four, are included in the current form of the blessing.

⁵² Pesachim 103b דאמר רבי אלעזר אמר רבי אושעיא הפוחת לא יפחות משלש והמוסיף לא יוסיף על שבע

⁵³ Bavli Pesachim 104a

⁵⁴ See Mishneh Torah Shabbat 29:3

⁵⁵ Elie Kaufner, "A Literary Approach to Havdalah: Structures and Intertexts" in *Havdalah*. ed. David Birnbaum and Martin S. Cohen. (New York: New Paradigm Matrix Publishing 2017), 42-43

Unlike the previous three blessings, the blessing of separation includes multiple examples and expressions of separation which endorse the hopes for redemption and salvation. The Talmud wonders what the proper etiquette is when it comes to ending a blessing with many themes. Attempting to find the proper phrase to end this blessing, the Gemara arrives upon two possibilities: ‘One who sanctifies Israel’ and ‘Who separates between holy and mundane.’⁵⁶ The two possibilities view this blessing and the ritual as a whole as either particular or universal. The text places the emphasis on separation as the dualities of the world are essential to human existence, not just the experience of Jews. Once all the blessings are recited, the candle is doused in the wine. With the dousing of the candle, made clear by the sizzle of the flame in the wine, Shabbat is over. *Songs of Redemption*. All Havdalah rituals include songs of redemption. As the candle is extinguished in the wine, the Ashkenazic rite concludes the ritual through the recitation of closing hymns. A parallel section exists in Sephardic and Mizrahi rites with some hymns also recited before the blessings as part of the preamble (see Appendix D). The closing hymns speak of the goodness of the upcoming week and mimic the final *chatimah* for the blessing of separation, adding wishes for the new week. One of these hymns is entitled *Hamavdil*, an 11th-century *piyyut* composed by Isaac ben Judah ibn Gayyat of Spain (see Appendix C). This poem was most likely composed for the *Neilah* service on Yom Kippur with its many references to the pardoning of sins.⁵⁷ Later, this poem was included in the Ashkenazi Havdalah rite to mimic the liminality present within

⁵⁶ Bavli Pesachim 104a

⁵⁷ “Hamavdil” in Macy Nulman, *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Prayer: Ashkenazic and Sephardic Rites* - אנציקלופדיה של תפילה בנוסח אשכנזי וספרד (Northvale, N.J.: Jason Aronson, 1993), 152

Neilah. One tradition is to recite only the first verse of the hymn which is a “modification of the biblical blessing of progeny” comparing the descendants of Abraham and Sarah to be as numerous as the sand or stars.⁵⁸ The Sephardic rite also begins with a thematically similar hymn by ibn Gayyat which refers to the redemptive nature of Havdalah.⁵⁹ The hymns prior to the dousing of the candle lead into messages about Elijah, which strongly emphasize the theme of redemption (see below). Many hymns have been penned for Havdalah and they all emphasize the redemptive power of Havdalah to bring salvation and peace.⁶⁰

Parallels with Erev Shabbat Home Rituals

The ritual objects of Havdalah parallel the rituals of Friday night. Ismar Elbogen, an early twentieth-century scholar, viewed Havdalah as a collection of *chavurah* or home rituals. He understood that Jews announced the beginning of Shabbat through the act of lighting candles and recitation of the *Kiddush* over wine.⁶¹ As the Havdalah ceremony developed, in Elbogen’s opinion, the already known customs of candles and wine found their way into the ritualistic formula. Rabbinic sources were similarly aware of traditions from Shabbat meals that paralleled those in Havdalah. *Mishnah Berakhot* describes the practice of blessing spices at meals.⁶² In Rashi’s interpretation of the *aggadah* in *Bavli Shabbat* 33b, the person carrying myrtle home on Friday night intended to have a smell

⁵⁸ Marc Brettler, “Our Biblical Heritage” in *My People's Prayer Book: Traditional Prayers, Modern Commentaries*. ed. Lawrence A Hoffman. Vol. 7: Shabbat at Home, no 1. (Woodstock, Vermont: Jewish Lights Publication, 2004), 182

⁵⁹ “Hamavdil” in *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Prayer*, 152

⁶⁰ Katz, “The Havdalah Ceremony,” 87

⁶¹ Hoffman, *Beyond the Text*, 27

⁶² *Mishnah Berakhot* 6:6

or incense for Shabbat. The clearest example of the rabbinic coupling of Havdalah and Friday night occurs in Maimonides' *Mishneh Torah*. To signify the boundaries of Shabbat, Maimonides declares one must demonstrate it over a cup of wine. The Rambam sees the Friday night *Kiddush* cup as a direct parallel to the Havdalah *cos*.⁶³ In his opinion, the commandment to remember Shabbat from Exodus 20 includes two tasks: to recite *Kiddush* (the first blessing of Shabbat) and Havdalah (the final blessings of Shabbat).⁶⁴ In order to remember, acknowledge, and mark Shabbat (as opposed to keeping it), the worshipper must ritually mark its beginning and end. Therefore, since the beginning and end of Shabbat parallel each other *halakhically*, their performance also must be parallel.

The framework of Havdalah parallels the thematic and structural flow of *Kiddush* on Shabbat evening. The Havdalah preamble parallels the Friday night Shabbat *Kiddush* which begins with a long quotation taken from Genesis to introduce the themes of Shabbat.⁶⁵ The introductory preambles in both *Kiddush* and Havdalah also foreshadow the ceremonies to come. They allow the transitions around the beginning and end of Shabbat to occur as “the circle of Sabbath consecration”⁶⁶ closes. Shabbat enters with praise of God for elevating Shabbat in holiness. Conversely, Shabbat departs with a call to action -- it is humanity's role to sanctify moments in our lives.⁶⁷ Structurally, both

⁶³ Mishneh Torah Shabbat 29:11

⁶⁴ *Sefer haMitzvot*: mitzvah aseih 155

⁶⁵ Daniel Landes, “The Halakhah of Prayer” in *My People's Prayer Book: Traditional Prayers, Modern Commentaries*. ed. Lawrence A Hoffman. Vol. 7: Shabbat at Home, no 1. (Woodstock, Vermont: Jewish Lights Publication, 2004), 177

⁶⁶ Yehuda, “The Ritual and the Concept of *Havdalah*,” 81

⁶⁷ Brettler, “Our Biblical Heritage,” 169

ceremonies begin with the blessing over wine and then move into the particulars of the day. This flow continues thematically as the blessings after the wine move from the universal to the particular.⁶⁸ Friday night *Kiddush* moves from the universal notion of Shabbat to the particular chosenness of the Jewish People. The blessing of separation similarly begins with the distinction between the states of holiness and mundanity and likewise moves towards the particularity of the chosenness of the People Israel.

Fire, like wine, is a symbolic marker of the time boundaries of Shabbat. On Friday night, Shabbat begins with the lighting of candles. The kindling of lights must come just before Shabbat arrives as Exodus 35:3 prohibits the kindling of fire on Shabbat. Shabbat exists as a time where the divine and human realms overlap. Fire and light, according to a rabbinic assumption, denote the spiritual height of Shabbat, and according to Simcha Fishbane, symbolize the power of God.⁶⁹ Havdalah, as the ritual that separates time and lowers the spiritual elevation, was crafted so the candle ended the biblical ban on kindling fire on Shabbat.⁷⁰ Havdalah reverses the prohibitions of Shabbat and uses the same symbolic device to return to the regulations of the week. The simple and peaceful eminence of the Shabbat candles contrast the braided Havdalah candle, which with its many wicks symbolizes the productivity of the week.⁷¹ The braided candle demonstrates that the time of rest has ended and the worshipper must begin to relocate

⁶⁸ Alyssa Gray, "Our Talmudic Heritage" in *My People's Prayer Book: Traditional Prayers, Modern Commentaries*. ed. Lawrence A Hoffman. Vol. 7: Shabbat at Home, no 1. (Woodstock, Vermont: Jewish Lights Publication, 2004), 174

⁶⁹ Simcha Fishbane, "Fire Symbolism in Jewish Law and Ritual" in Fishbane, Simcha. *Impact of Culture and Cultures Upon Jewish Customs and Rituals: Collected Essays*. (Judaism and Jewish Life. Brighton, MA: Academic Studies Press, 2016), 5

⁷⁰ Hoffman, *Beyond the Text*, 27

⁷¹ Yehuda, "The Ritual and the Concept of *Havdalah*," 83

themselves in the world, focusing on the immediate future that lies ahead. As the lighting of candles introduces the prohibitions which distinguish Shabbat from the week, the candle in Havdalah reverses this decree, opening up the potential for work and creation in the week ahead.

The spices are an object of rejoicing used to counteract the declining spiritual nature as the week begins. Spices and Shabbat connect through the use of myrtle (see above) and certain Sephardic communities continue to use a variety of spices throughout Shabbat rituals, including Friday night.⁷² Spices were a luxury in antiquity when they were harder to acquire; therefore they added a luxuriousness throughout Shabbat.⁷³

Just as wine signifies changes in liminal time, spices signify changes in emotional or spiritual states. The framework of medieval rabbinic theology develops the link that connects spices, Shabbat, and the soul. The Book of Exodus gives the Creation story as the rationale for the celebration of Shabbat. From this link, Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish believes:

נשמה יתירה נותן הקב"ה באדם ערב שבת ולמוצאי שבת נוטלין אותה הימנו שנאמר (שמות לא, יז) שבת וינפש

The Holy One, Blessed be God, gives a person an additional soul on Shabbat eve, and at the conclusion of Shabbat removes it from them, as it is stated: "God ceased from work and was refreshed [*vayinafash*]" (Exodus 31:17).⁷⁴

Our souls are intimately connected to Shabbat as God was 'ensouled'⁷⁵ during the first Shabbat. Since humanity is divinely conceived, each human is also ensouled, i.e. given an

⁷² Yehuda 82

⁷³ Brettler, "Our Biblical Heritage," 169

⁷⁴ Beitzah 16a

⁷⁵ Literal interpretation of וינפש

additional soul every Shabbat. Additionally, the Creation narrative accounts that humanity was breathed into being with a נשמת חיים, a life-soul.⁷⁶ The soul developed “in the popular imagination as the divine endowment most often associated with human spiritual potential”⁷⁷ which fits with the messages embedded in Shabbat. Recorded in the comments of the Tosafot on Beitzah 33b, there was a known belief that our permanent soul is saddened when the extra soul we receive on Shabbat departs and the spices cheer up our soul and prepare it for the week ahead.⁷⁸ In sum, Havdalah spices carry the joy of Shabbat into the week. In contrast, spices are unnecessary and excluded from the Havdalah when Shabbat leads into a festival because the move is from one joyous time to another.

Thematic Trends in Havdalah

Separation. Within Judaism, separation of holy and mundane can be explained through time, social group or through cultural statements.⁷⁹ Havdalah expresses the theme of separation through each of these elements highlighting the existence and importance of distinctions in the world. In order to keep holy and mundane time unique and separate, Havdalah stands in the middle as a transitional ritual. As mentioned above, the ritual of Havdalah most likely developed as a reaction to the unmarked yet real transition from

⁷⁶ Gen. 2:7

⁷⁷ Martin S. Cohen, “The Extra Soul and the Common Heart” in *Havdalah*. ed. David Birnbaum and Martin S. Cohen. (New York: New Paradigm Matrix Publishing 2017), 96

⁷⁸ Beitzah 33b - Tosafot

⁷⁹ Hoffman, *Beyond the Text*, 37

Shabbat to the week. Similar to the role God played in the opening chapters of Genesis, Havdalah separates and organizes natural dichotomies, creating order out of chaos.⁸⁰

The laws in the Book of Leviticus accentuate divisions within the world through a spectrum of holy to mundane. Leviticus, according to the Documentary Hypothesis, was the latest addition to the Torah, written by the priestly class in the exilic period of the sixth century BCE⁸¹. A major purpose of the priestly writings was to reconstruct the heavenly world on earth, the idealized realization of our world. The opening distinction in the havdalah blessing, בין קודש לחול, between holiness and mundane, is found throughout the levitical writings. Tamara Cohn Eskenazi observes that:

to preserve God's orderly world, where everything has an assigned place, Leviticus specifies what must be done whenever boundaries are ... crossed, be they boundaries of the body, time, or space - such as between sacred and non-sacred, or between life and death. ... Rituals, including sacrifices, serve to cancel or neutralize damage done to the created order and thereby restore the equilibrium.⁸²

Leviticus prescribes rituals through which humans can restore cosmic order in a world where boundaries are constantly crossed. As Shabbat is replaced by the weekday, time shifts from sacred to non-sacred. Havdalah exists as the ritual that allows this transition to occur in a predictable and orderly way without causing friction.

⁸⁰ Dena Freundlich, "Havdalah: Sanctification of Hol" in *Havdalah*. ed. David Birnbaum and Martin S. Cohen. (New York: New Paradigm Matrix Publishing 2017), 274

⁸¹ Marvin A. Sweeney, "The Modern Study of the Bible" in *The Jewish Study Bible*. ed. Adele Berlin and Marc Zvi Brettler. Second ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 2168

⁸² Tamara Cohn Eskenazi, "Vayikra-Leviticus" in *The Torah: A Women's Commentary*. ed. Tamara Cohn Eskenazi and Andrea L. Weiss (New York: Women of Reform Judaism, Federation of Temple Sisterhood, 2008), 567

Havdalah al hakos emphasizes the positive nature of duality. Rituals of separation attempt to strike the balance between holy and regular through contrasting dualities.⁸³ The first distinction recorded in the Torah separated light from dark and both elements are present within Havdalah. As mentioned above, the candle must be braided, which the fire of the candle highlights both the distinction between and unification of light and dark. The woven candle illustrates that holiness and mundanity are not opposites but two realities of existence and Havdalah accentuates each side of a dichotomy.⁸⁴ While dualistic religions (such as Zoroastrianism which was the religious milieu of the Babylonian Talmud) see light and dark as eternal opposites, never to come in contact, Judaism takes the opposite viewpoint.⁸⁵ In liminal moments, distinctions blur as transitions occur. The separation of Havdalah “is not simply about proclaiming separation, but rather a recognition that differences are important and necessary, and can become greater than the sum of the parts.”⁸⁶ As Samuel Raphael Hirsch understood it, “the word *havdalah* goes beyond the notion of mere separation, and implies a positive allocation, a separate existence, a separate purpose.”⁸⁷ Havdalah separates and distinguishes two categories of time by bringing the two halves of the dichotomy together. From this perspective, the distinction between holy and mundane spheres has no

⁸³ Triguboff, “Havdalah, the Lights of the Fire,” 145

⁸⁴ Rothstein, Gidon. “Differentiating Our Differentiations: Shades of Havdalah” in *Havdalah*. ed. David Birnbaum and Martin S. Cohen. (New York: New Paradigm Matrix Publishing 2017), 253

⁸⁵ Hoffman, *Beyond the Tex*, 40-1

⁸⁶ Jeremy Rosen, “Havdalah: Does it Separate or Combine? A Memoir and a Legacy” in *Havdalah*. ed. David Birnbaum and Martin S. Cohen. (New York: New Paradigm Matrix Publishing 2017), 198

⁸⁷ Reuven P. Bulka, “Havdalah: The Essence of Judaism” in *Havdalah*. ed. David Birnbaum and Martin S. Cohen. (New York: New Paradigm Matrix Publishing 2017), 13

value attached. Without categorization, the world is chaotic and irrational. Separation ascribes order which allows life to progress, uninterrupted by the transforming nature of the world.

Another key distinction present within Havdalah classifies humans into different categories. The sorting of humanity into various groups stems from Genesis when humans are broken into different families.⁸⁸ Later, the descendants of Aaron, the biblical priests, are a class distinguished by God for their role to serve as functionaries in the Tabernacle and then the Temple. The Talmud sees this distinction among Israelites as a suitable representation of human distinctions, ultimately including it as a possible distinction within the blessing of separation.⁸⁹ Yet, this was not the distinction chosen to represent human classification. As mentioned above, rabbis of different eras utilized spices as one method of distinguishing Jews from their neighbors. The designation of the ritual objects defines Havdalah as a ritual that separates Jews from their neighbors. Saadia Gaon composes the final blessing of Havdalah in his tenth-century prayer book to illustrate the separation of Israel not only from all the nations but specifically from Egypt.⁹⁰ His blessing derives from the Talmudic precedent to have all distinctions come directly from the Torah, referring to Exodus 11:7. This verse justifies the final plague in Egypt “in order that you may know that Adonai makes a distinction between Egypt and Israel.”⁹¹ Saadia Gaon’s blessing demonstrates the rabbinic strategy to explicitly and

⁸⁸ See Gen. 10

⁸⁹ See Bavli Pesachim 104a

⁹⁰ Hoffman, *Beyond the Text*, 40

⁹¹ All biblical translations adapted from *The Jewish Publication Society* to allow for gender inclusivity unless otherwise noted

implicitly use the structure of Havdalah to illustrate the contrast between Jews and Gentiles. The havdalah blessing focuses on the Israelites as a chosen people separate from the rest of the nations of the world reflecting the Levitical precedent to view the world through divisions.⁹²

The classification of human groups can feel xenophobic and alienating to contemporary Jews. But the reasoning stems from the historical realities of Jew as this ceremony developed. Hoffman understands Havdalah to have formed in the instability of acculturation and Hellenization.⁹³ This ritual differentiates peoples in order to separate Jews from the assimilatory trends that they faced and give a rationale for the continued existence of Jews and Judaism despite the assimilatory policies that spread across the Mediterranean and Middle East during Late Antiquity. In the Middle Ages, blood libels, Crusades, and dhimi status were just some expressions of anti-Semitism that terrorized Jews. The fears of annihilation in medieval Europe was real and “Havdalah’s ritual items symbolized strength, offering Jews fortitude as they crossed the threshold from holy, safe space to an unholy, often menacing world.”⁹⁴ As Catharine Clark describes, “the [havdalah] blessing divides the world into dichotomous pairs: Jews are linked with the sacred, with light, and with Shabbat, while people who are not Jewish are connected to

⁹² Lev. 20:24 - וְאָמַר לְכֹהֵם אַתֶּם תִּירְשׁוּ אֶת־אֲדָמָתָם וְאֲנִי אֶתְנֶנָּה לָכֶם לְרִשְׁתָּ אֹתָהּ אֶרֶץ זָבֶת חֶלֶב וְדִבְשׁ אֲנִי - and [God] said to you: You shall possess their land, for I will give it to you to possess, a land flowing with milk and honey. I Adonai am your God who has set you apart from the other peoples

⁹³ Hoffman, *Beyond the Text*, 39

⁹⁴ Thide, “For Just Such a Time as This,” 69

the profane, with darkness, and with the six working days of the week.”⁹⁵ The historical realities reactualized themselves within the Havdalah ceremony in order to provide comfort and hope.

With some reinterpretation, the same symbols which separate Jews from their neighbors can also be reclaimed to unite humanity. In her recreation of this blessing, Marcia Falk sees the spices as representing the beauty found within the diversity of humanity. In her notes, she comments that “the English word ‘essence,’ which derives from the Latin *esse*, ‘to be,’ and which means both ‘identity’ and ‘scent,’ demonstrates this association.”⁹⁶ Scents not only differentiate identity but affirm them as well. The spices used during Havdalah, according to Falk, remind the worshipper of their responsibility to unify and confirm their human identity.

A Retelling of the Creation Narrative. A running theme throughout Havdalah is the retelling of the Creation narrative. Every ritual, according to ritualist Mircea Eliade, “represents reactualization of a sacred event that took place in a mythical past, ‘in the beginning.’”⁹⁷ The opening chapter of Genesis has a large impact on Havdalah since the existence of Shabbat comes from this section. The first biblical use of the root of havdalah (ה.ד.ל) appears in the story of Creation; God separates and divides five times in the first chapter.⁹⁸ The centrality of this *leitwort* in this text emphasizes the way the

⁹⁵ Catherine Clark, “Who Are We Separating From Whom? Havdalah and the (Multigenerational) Interfaith Family” in *Havdalah*. ed. David Birnbaum and Martin S. Cohen. (New York: New Paradigm Matrix Publishing 2017), 150

⁹⁶ Marcia Falk, *The Book of Blessings: New Jewish Prayers for Daily Life, the Sabbath, and the New Moon Festival*. (New York: Reform Judaism Publishing, 2017), 490

⁹⁷ Mircea Eliade and Willard R Trask, *The Sacred and the Profane : The Nature of Religion*. (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1959), 68-9

⁹⁸ Gen. 1:4, 6, 7, 14, 18

Havdalah ritual strives to bring this sacred text to fruition, in other words, “to cross the boundary between sacred and profane, not simply to play in the world of the sacred.”⁹⁹ By separating our world into distinct categories, humanity, in *imitatio deo* fashion, mimics God’s actions of creation and repair of the world. Havdalah then continues in this vein of replicating God’s acts of creation.

The unique wording of the blessing over the candle strongly harkens back to Genesis. Bringing light into the world was the first act of creation; the first chapter of Torah specifically mentions God distinguishing between light and darkness twice.¹⁰⁰ The havdalah blessing then mimics the first chapter of Genesis by explicitly mentioning the first act of creation, separating light amidst the darkness.¹⁰¹ Yet the blessing over the candle blesses the fire and the benefit of its light, rather than the act of kindling itself.¹⁰² The reason for the unique wording of this blessing is recorded in the Mishnah. According to Beit Shammai, God was the original creator of fire who graciously gave the knowledge of kindling fire to humanity. Creation of fire was a thing of the past; therefore, Shammai crafted his blessing in the past tense to denote that fire should be mentioned as a prior, one-time gift. However, for Hillel, fire is continually created with every new kindling; every fire kindled holds a new spark of holiness. Therefore, Hillel scripted his blessing in the present tense to denote the ongoing holiness of ritual fire. This blessing allows the worshipper to praise God for “not only this specific Shabbat and this specific week [but

⁹⁹ Seligman and Weller, *Rethinking Pluralism*, 7

¹⁰⁰ Gen. 1:4, 18

¹⁰¹ Hayim Donin, “Havdalah: The Ritual and the Concept” *Tradition: A Journal of Orthodox Jewish Thought* 3, no. 1 (Fall 1960), 64-5

¹⁰² As compared to the blessing over the candle on Friday night

also ...] recalling the very first Shabbat, established as the seventh day of creation.”¹⁰³ As David Greenstein explains, the Havdalah candle imparts not only a reminder of Creation but a charge to kindle physical and spiritual lights in the week ahead.

In the rabbinic imagination, Adam was the first person to celebrate Shabbat and therefore the first to separate the week from the seventh day. In Psalms Rabbah, at the close of Shabbat, Adam’s first true evening,¹⁰⁴ Adam sees the sky reddening and then darken. He becomes worried that the world is ending as soon as it began. So what did God do?

God invited him [Adam] to get two stones, one of darkness and one death’s shadow, as it says “He sets bounds for darkness; To every limit man probes, to rocks in deepest darkness” (Job 28:3). And the first man took the two stones and struck them together and out came fire and he separated upon it ‘Creator of the lights of fire.’ And because of this, we separate over light on Motzei Shabbat.¹⁰⁵

God gives Adam the ritual of Havdalah as a comfort for the week ahead. While the close of Shabbat brings worry and doubt about the world, the fire reminds the worshipper of God’s dominion and protection over humanity since the first human being. His wisdom pushed him to discover the idea of distinguishing time and create the Havdalah ceremony. In homage to the first character to be associated with the knowledge to distinguish time, this ritual came to be associated with Adam, further linking Havdalah to Genesis.

¹⁰³David Greenstein, “The Artist Makes Havdalah” in *Havdalah*. ed. David Birnbaum and Martin S. Cohen. (New York: New Paradigm Matrix Publishing 2017), 212

¹⁰⁴ The midrash begins with an understanding that Shabbat was originally 36 hours long and Adam was created just before Motzei Shabbat.

¹⁰⁵ Psalms Rabbah 92

The Adam narrative continues to influence Havdalah as it recapitulates and reenacts the expulsion from the Garden of Eden. Shabbat is often referred to as a taste of the world to come. The rabbis understood the world to come as the reestablishment of the Garden of Eden. The end of Shabbat spiritually mimics the final stage of the Garden of Eden story. As Rachel Adelman understands it, the story's main through-line follows this order: humanity gains fire, they are blessed, and ultimately humans are banished from Eden and enter the mundanity of the world.¹⁰⁶ Havdalah follows a similar system as the ritual begins with the lighting of fire, blessings are recited,¹⁰⁷ then Shabbat ends and the worshipper is thrust into the week, leaving behind the perfection of the seventh day. Adelman summarized that by extension then, "Eden has its analogue in the Sabbath; and exile, in the departure of the Sabbath."¹⁰⁸ Havdalah reenacts the first human narrative, the origins of our human experience in the world, as a reminder to live and perfect the world.

This banishment out of Shabbat and into the week, just like its biblical counterpart, is not necessarily a negative experience. Rather than see our human story in a negative light, Havdalah reframes the end of Shabbat as permission to continue the story through the process of creating as humanity strives to reach Eden once again.¹⁰⁹ Genesis 3:21 records that God clothes the human couple with divine light before they

¹⁰⁶ Rachel Adelman, "The Poetics of Time and Space in the Midrashic Narrative: The Case of Pirkei De Rabbi Eliezer." (PhD diss., Hebrew University, 2008), 253

¹⁰⁷ The Zohar refers to Havdalah spices as a 'Fragrance of Eden' and mystically, the physicality of the Havdalah light on fingernails represents "ten lights, reminiscent of the ten spheres of consciousness." - see Triguboff, "Havdalah, the Lights of the Fire"

¹⁰⁸ Rachel Adelman, "Primordial Adam and the First Havdalah" in *Havdalah*. ed. David Birnbaum and Martin S. Cohen. (New York: New Paradigm Matrix Publishing 2017), 117

¹⁰⁹ Freundlich, 273

leave Eden, giving them divine protection in the world outside the garden. Midrashic tradition explains that these clothes were compared to shiny fingernails radiating the light of Eden.¹¹⁰ Therefore, the custom arose to glance at the light reflecting off one's fingernails while reciting the third blessing.¹¹¹ The light of the Havdalah candle reflecting off the worshipper's fingernails mimics Adam and Eve's original clothing. The glancing at one's fingernails reminds the worshipper that despite the end of Shabbat, every human is a microcosm of the universe, clothed in God's protective light.¹¹² Adelman summarizes this idea as such: "Jews reenact that original banishment from Eden and God's act of compensation by blessing the flame every week at the end of the Sabbath. The myth is thus given a performative function, signifying that time before history began."¹¹³ Eden/Shabbat is not a sustainable place for humans and can only be experienced in small doses. Havdalah reminds the worshipper of the balance between Divine judgement and mercy. The elements of Havdalah fill the ritual with "positive overtones of resuming creative activity."¹¹⁴ Havdalah narrates the human story from its genesis, noting humanity can continue to evolve only by stepping out of the completely holy, and enter the mundanity of the world.

Redemption. While the rites differ in the order and use of scriptural verses, all contemporary versions of Havdalah's preamble and hymns center on the theme of deliverance. The medieval period, the likely social milieu in which the liturgy of

¹¹⁰ See Pirkei de Rabbi Eliezer 14 and Genesis Rabbah 20:12

¹¹¹ Shulkhan Arukh Orach Hayyim 298:3

¹¹² Triguboff, "Havdalah, the Lights of the Fire", 137

¹¹³ Adelman, "Primordial Adam," 111

¹¹⁴ Freundlich, "Havdalah: Sanctification of Hol," 274

Havdalah developed, saw a resurgence of messianic and redemptive movements and Jewish rituals were influenced by the social climate.¹¹⁵ The Jews of the Medieval Period expressed their concerns through their liturgy and Havdalah was no exemption. Looking at the Ashkenazic rite, the theme of deliverance presumably is connected to military deliverance, most likely an outcome from the devastation of the Rhineland communities during the Crusades.¹¹⁶ The Sephardic and Mizrahi rites also reflected their position in the world through Havdalah as Jews lived between the warring worlds of Islam and Christianity.¹¹⁷ In light of the upheaval of social orders at the turn of the millennium, Havdalah, as a regularly occurring liminal moment, became an outlet to express their concerns and hope for stability and salvation.

Two verses appear in both rites despite their unique origins: Esther 8:16 and Psalms 116:13. Both of these verses, as mentioned above, connect to the blessings and ritual objects about to come while also reflecting on the theme of redemption. Liminal moments on the Jewish calendar reflect the need to use these verses. Included in Hallel, Psalm 116 creates uplift at liminal moments because it “expresses the thanksgiving of one whose request has been answered [...] acknowledges God as rescuer, and promises to fulfill his or her vows, thus weaving past and future into the present gratitude.”¹¹⁸ The raised cup demonstrates the celebration of hope in the presence of the divine in the world.

¹¹⁵ Lawrence Hoffman, “History of the Liturgy” in *My People's Prayer Book: Traditional Prayers, Modern Commentaries*. ed. Lawrence A Hoffman. Vol. 7: Shabbat at Home, no 1. (Woodstock, Vermont: Jewish Lights Publication, 2004), 187

¹¹⁶ Brettler, “Our Biblical Heritage,” 169

¹¹⁷ Jane S. Gerber, *The Jews of Spain: A History of the Sephardic Experience*. (New York: Free Press, 1992), (Location 1640)

¹¹⁸ Konrad Schaefer, and David W Cotter. *Psalms: Berit Olam*. (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 2001), 285

Similarly, Chapter 8 of Esther, as a key biblical moment of redemption, epitomizes the exaltation achieved from Jewish might and salvation. In conversation, the two verses question the divine attribute of salvation; is salvation only a task God can achieve or can humans also bring redemption? Ora Horn Prouser infers that the highlighting of the Esther verse in Havdalah reflects a need “to read Havdalah as a rabbinic response to Esther, categorically responding to the book’s ambivalence about issues such as separation and the role of God in the world.”¹¹⁹ These verses together refute the messianic theology of the medieval milieu, and instead reinforce the notion that deliverance remains not with a human messianic or papal figure but with God alone.¹²⁰ Through the use of Psalms 116 and Esther 8, the preamble reframes the essence of salvation as a divine act that humanity awaits, calling out for its arrival at the beginning of every week.

The major character who appears in the Havdalah ritual is the biblical prophet, Elijah. Elijah plays a pivotal role in the lives of the Jews according to rabbinic works.¹²¹ For the rabbis, Elijah was the ideal candidate to express their messianic desires. He is described at the end of the book of Malachi as a messianic figure¹²² who will return and bring the world into the End of Days.¹²³ Elijah’s prominence in liturgy is highlighted through the many fragments of Havdalah piyyutim found in the Cairo Genizah where he

¹¹⁹ Ora Horn Prouser, “A Certain Time: An Intertextual Reading of Havdalah and Esther” in *Havdalah*. ed. David Birnbaum and Martin S. Cohen. (New York: New Paradigm Matrix Publishing 2017), 61

¹²⁰ Yehuda, “The Ritual and the Concept of *Havdalah*,” 80

¹²¹ Adelman “*The Poetics of Time and Space*,” 272

¹²² Mal. 3:23-24

¹²³ Adelman “*The Poetics of Time and Space*,” 292

is referenced as the herald of the messiah.¹²⁴ Elijah and Havdalah meet at the rabbinic understanding that Shabbat is a taste of the world to come.¹²⁵ Elijah came to represent the yearning for the messianic era and for this reason, Elijah was included within the Havdalah ceremony.¹²⁶

All rites include a petition to Elijah to herald the messianic era. As the new week begins, these liturgical additions reflect the messianic role of Elijah through “verses of comfort and salvation, blessings and petitions, magical formulas, and *piyyutim*.”¹²⁷ The focus on Elijah can be compared to similar trends of messianism within the Christian world in the eleventh century.¹²⁸ In the Sephardic rite, Elijah is mentioned before any blessings are recited in order to anticipate the Messiah’s coming. Medieval sources indicate a belief that the herald of redemption would come on Motzei Shabbat because the herald would not defy the prohibition of travel on Shabbat.¹²⁹ Instead of calling out to the Messiah, Havdalah begins with a call for Elijah, the herald, whom the Messiah would then follow. The Ashkenazi rite waits till the very end to mention Elijah. As the ceremony ends, the worshippers sing about this messianic herald, anticipating his arrival.

For the rabbis, Elijah was a fitting symbol for Havdalah because he offered hope and protection in the transition from Shabbat into the week. The rabbis searched for protection during liminal moments. We see this clearly in life cycle ceremonies, such as

¹²⁴ Moshe Lavee, “Literary Canonization at Work: The Authority of Aggadic Midrash and the Evolution of Havdalah Poetry in the Genizah.” *AJS Review* 37, no. 2 (2013), 298

¹²⁵ BT Berakhot 57b: שבת אחד מששים לעולם הבא, Shabbat is one-sixtieth of the world to come

¹²⁶ See Shulkhan Arukh Orach Hayyim 295:1

¹²⁷ Lavee, “Literary Canonization at Work,” 298

¹²⁸ Hoffman, “History of the Liturgy,” 187

¹²⁹ Hoffman, *Beyond the Text*, 25

circumcisions and weddings.¹³⁰ The custom developed to offer Elijah a spot in the Havdalah ceremony. He is a connection to the past, a story of righteous zealotry. He is a messenger of the covenant. And finally, he represents the messianic figure depicted in Malachi.¹³¹ Havdalah is understood as a moment which heralds salvation, a liminal eschatological moment where Elijah also arrives to announce the World to Come (see above: Preamble). Songs about Elijah as herald of the redemption provide comfort in the distress caused by the departure of Shabbat.

Just as the preamble reframes the nature of salvation, the closing hymns reinterpret the theme again. The characterization of Elijah is “strongly suggestive of the hope for a figurative separation between the darkness of exile and the light of redemption.”¹³² Elijah offers the worshipper “spiritual meaning and value [...] comfort and security to their uncertainty and anxiety as they turned from the world of God and prepared to face the world of man.”¹³³ Havdalah creates space to herald salvation through our work in the week. As Shmuly Yanklowitz states,

“Every Shabbat is an invitation to sample a taste of a world that is perfected, a world where everyone comes together under the banner of a singular vision of peace. It is in the context of this brief respite from business and labor that we are invited to refocus our vision for the world: a world suffused with tranquility. Havdalah is the transition between these two mindsets”¹³⁴

¹³⁰ See Bavli Berakhot 54a

¹³¹ Adelman, “The Poetics of Time and Space,” 282

¹³² Michelle J. Levine, “Havdalah-Emulating God in Mind and Deed” in *Havdalah*. ed. David Birnbaum and Martin S. Cohen. (New York: New Paradigm Matrix Publishing 2017), 236

¹³³ Bogue, “The Havdalah Ceremony,” 82-3

¹³⁴ Yanklowitz, Shmuly. “Havdalah: A Social Justice Perspective” in *Havdalah*. ed. David Birnbaum and Martin S. Cohen. (New York: New Paradigm Matrix Publishing 2017), 82

Havdalah forces the worshipper to leave the idealized state of the seventh day and reenter the week where the worshippers themselves are called upon to infuse their lives with moments of salvation. With the calling out for Elijah, Havdalah attempts to bring a sense of redemption into the world through our actions. The worshippers must not ignore their own actions as glimmers of hope and prayer for this time to be heralded in during the coming week.

Following ancient customs, modern interpreters have connected other biblical figures who represent redemption to this closing section. For example, Rabbi Leila Gal Berner composed an additional *piyyut* about Miriam. As Berner explains, Miriam and Elijah are “inspiring prophetic figures who model leadership traits that may help to strengthen us on our journey toward redemption.”¹³⁵ This new *piyyut* gives voice to women who for centuries have been silenced in Jewish rituals. It also connects the ideas of redemption with *tiikun olam*, the repairing of the world, inspiring the worshipper to actively bring a sense of redemption into the world in the coming week. Other siddurim have followed this model with adaptations and modern readings that parallel the themes of this section.¹³⁶ The Havdalah ritual ends with a hopeful outlook, synthesizing the themes of the ritual.

Repurposing Havdalah al hakos

Havdalah has been an accepted and constant ritual in the Shabbat liturgy.

Havdalah al hakos became a necessary component of Shabbat and its liturgy as early as

¹³⁵ *Kol Haneshamah: Shabbat Vehagim*. (Wyncote PA: The Reconstructionist Press, 1994), 520

¹³⁶ See Union Prayer Book: Sinai Edition; Siddur Young Judea; Siddur Lev Chadash

Machzor Vitry in the eleventh century.¹³⁷ Since then, it has been a staple in prayer books from the mystical 16th century *Siddur HaAri* to contemporary American Reform *Mishkan T'filah*. It has since sparked the interest of Jews in institutions from synagogues to summer camps. In a 2004 study, 65 percent of all Jewish summer camps had a Havdalah service. Those affiliated with a denominational movement or had Zionist connections overwhelmingly agreed that Havdalah was an integral camp experience, reaching 100 percent of those studied.¹³⁸ From this study, it is clear that Havdalah is viewed as an integral ritual for Shabbat in many Jewish circles.

Judaism is built upon the evolving nature of rituals. Vanessa Ochs defines Jewish rituals as “concessional or patterned ways of doing things that have shared and often multiple meanings[, they] have always been the product of a time, a place, available physical materials, and appealing practices of other peoples.”¹³⁹ According to her definition, rituals are required to respond to the world and evolve with it; if they remain stagnant, rituals lose all meaning.¹⁴⁰ Rituals themselves never appear *ex nihilo*, they often elaborate upon already widely performed actions.¹⁴¹ For millennia, Jewish life cycle rituals were androcentric, tracing the male trajectory through a lifetime. In the twenty-first century, most Jewish communities have recognized the need to address the entire community and the many transitional moments in the lives of its members. From

¹³⁷ Hoffman, *Beyond the Text*, 23-4

¹³⁸ Amy L Sales, and Leonard Saxe, *"How Goodly Are Thy Tents": Summer Camps As Jewish Socializing Experiences*. (Hanover: University Press of New England, 2004), 38

¹³⁹ Vanessa L. Ochs *Inventing Jewish Ritual: New American Traditions*. (Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society, 2007), 32

¹⁴⁰ Tom F. Driver, *Liberating Rites: Understanding the Transformative Power of Ritual*. (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1998), 185

¹⁴¹ Driver, 19

confirmations to renaming ceremonies for transgender people to a *te'udat preida* (a Reform approach to divorce), rituals have been created and repurposed to address these new moments. Therefore, the adaptation of ritual not only is acceptable but encouraged in Judaism because “all rituals are made and remade, all rituals mean different things to different people, and all rituals were once new and are renewed - even the Jewish rituals we may cherish most of all.”¹⁴² As the life cycle evolves, the rituals that mark these transitions must also expand. Havdalah, as one ritual which marks the crossing of boundaries and identities, serves as a fitting example to be repurposed for the modern life cycle.

Havdalah has evolved throughout history and becomes a perfect ritual to adapt to contemporary liminal moments. The historical development of Havdalah sanctions the evolution of rituals related to it. *Siddur Saadia*, a tenth-century work and earliest known collection of Jewish liturgy, includes an interpretation of a Havdalah service where every blessing of the service mentions some form of separation. The twentieth century American Reform prayer book “Gates of Prayer” includes two Havdalah ceremonies that alter the blessings to maintain the universalistic outlook of the movement. The music Debbie Friedman composed for Havdalah has become synonymous with the ritual itself across all denominations. Beit Tefilah Israeli, a liberal Israeli synagogue, has already repurposed Havdalah in connection with The Temple in Atlanta to mark a new transitional moment. Their ritual distinguishes the emotional shift from *Yom HaZikaron*

¹⁴² Ochs, *Inventing Jewish Ritual*, 32

to *Yom Ha'Atzmaut*, ritualizing the transition from mourning to celebration.¹⁴³ Jews of all backgrounds have proven this ritual can provide meaning for all who participate. Shmuly Yanklowitz views Havdalah as an enticing ritual because humans interact with the world through a sense of separation, just as they do through sight or touch.¹⁴⁴ The rituals created below continue the tradition of adapting Havdalah to the needs of the Jewish community, constructing a framework for celebrating and marking the many transitions between holy and mundane moments in the Jewish lives.

¹⁴³ See [rituawell.org](https://www.ritualwell.org/ritual/havdalah-transitional-ceremony-between-yom-ha%E2%80%99zikaron-yom-ha%E2%80%99atzmaut) for the entire ritual - <https://www.ritualwell.org/ritual/havdalah-transitional-ceremony-between-yom-ha%E2%80%99zikaron-yom-ha%E2%80%99atzmaut>

¹⁴⁴ Yanklowitz, “Havdalah: A Social Justice Perspective,” 88

Chapter 2: A New Transition in the Life Cycle: Contemporary Retirement

Life Cycle Transitions: Retirement

Retirement as a life cycle transition has gained recognition among ritualists and demographers alike. The rise in life expectancy and the viability of post-work years has brought awareness to it. People are living longer and the vibrancy of post-retirement life can now extend throughout multiple decades. With the recent demographic trends, secular society has yet to fully understand and tackle the challenges and opportunities that later life presents.¹⁴⁵ As the length of life expands, the life cycle also grows and can respond to the new realities. Because humans live longer, “most of us will have to reinvent ourselves many times as we go through life.”¹⁴⁶ Life cycle rituals are built upon transitory periods where ritual helps guide the person from one identity to another. Religious rituals can be viewed as one method of responding to these transitional moments. Despite this, the Jewish world has not fared any better in responding to the needs brought up by retirement as “there is no Jewish ritual, or prescribed structure, to help in the search for meaning and identity transition at this age.”¹⁴⁷ Judaism is still in the process of responding to the needs of the gerontological community.

¹⁴⁵ Froma Walsh, “Families in Later Life: Challenges, Opportunities, and Resilience,” in *The Expanding Family Life Cycle: Individual, Family, and Social Perspectives* ed. Monica McGoldrick, Betty Carter, Nydia Garcia Preto. (Boston: Pearson, 2016), 341

¹⁴⁶ Monica McGoldrick, “The Life Cycle in Its Changing Context: Individual Family and Social Perspectives,” in *The Expanding Family Life Cycle: Individual, Family, and Social Perspectives* ed. Monica McGoldrick, Betty Carter, Nydia Garcia Preto. (Boston: Pearson, 2016), 40

¹⁴⁷ David, Adelson "Identity Transition at Retirement Age." (D. Min. Thesis, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, New York, 2016), 3

While localized rituals exist, there is a move toward centralized programming to respond to the emerging needs of the aging population. Examples include the Sacred Aging program by Rabbi Richard Address and Wise Aging by Rabbi Rachel Cowan and Dr. Linda Thal. Address, a guru of sacred aging from a Jewish perspective, notes that if religion is to remain relevant, it “must be able to address the questions of meaning that now begin to preoccupy our psyche.”¹⁴⁸ These efforts provide new possibilities for those over the age of 65 throughout the entire aging process, not just the smaller moments such as retirement. Even more so, many of these programs view retirement as the entry into elderhood focusing on what lies ahead rather than marking it as a transitional moment between two life stages. The limited focus leaves retirees searching their own ritual background to find a moment past the “big dinner and gold watch,”¹⁴⁹ which leaves little if any lasting relief during this transition. As a major signifier of the shifting identity, retirement deserves more attention as a significant and profound moment that can be ritualized.

Old age in our contemporary, western American society is characterized in negative terms. These negative assumptions follow the reasoning that after “we ascend the ladder of our careers, reach the zenith of our success and influence in midlife, [we] then give way to an inevitable decline that culminates in a weak, often impoverished old age.”¹⁵⁰ Societal standards create a negative view of retirement that pushes retirees to the

¹⁴⁸ Richard F. Address, *Seekers of Meaning: Baby Boomers, Judaism, and the Pursuit of Healthy Aging*. (New York, N.Y.: URJ Press, 2011), 8

¹⁴⁹ Moselle, Andrea. “A Time for Time.” *Ritualwell*, Apr 22 2013, www.ritualwell.org/blog/time-time.

¹⁵⁰ Zalman Schachter-Shalomi, *From Age-Ing to Sage-Ing: a Profound New Vision of Growing Older*. (New York: Warner Books, 1995), 5

outskirts of society, viewing them as burdensome failures. Daniel A. Roberts and Michael Friedman compare retirement to the grief process. Friedman remembers that through his retirement, “like all mourners, I found myself between two worlds: the world that was and the world to be. To progress, I had to do the dance of grief, three steps forward and one back.”¹⁵¹ Like all transitional moments, retirement carries the possibility of experiencing loss and pain. The loss that accompanies retirement often relates to the shift of identity. American society fixates identity upon careers and, as Froma Walsh notes, “for most, retirement involves the loss of job roles, status, and productivity, valued as our culture’s (male) standards for identity, success and self-esteem in adult life.”¹⁵² While the identity change of retirement involves identity loss, Schachter-Shalomi suggests it also includes the gaining of “wisdom, serenity, balanced judgment, and self-knowledge that represent the fruit of long life experience.”¹⁵³ The imbalance between these sometimes conflicting experiences partly derives from a lack of structure surrounding this transition. Many retirees are among the first generation to experience this shift in identity with the prospect of many years left post-retirement and they have no model of what to expect. Retirees “are challenged to include and honor who they are and where they have been into who they continue to be [...] hopefully, still able to imagine creativity, growth and fullness of life despite the ways that life will look different than it

¹⁵¹ Daniel A. Roberts and Michael P. Friedman, *Clergy Retirement: Every Ending a New Beginning for Clergy, Their Families, and Congregants*. (New York: Baywood Publishing Company, 2016), 24

¹⁵² Walsh, “Families in Later Life,” 343

¹⁵³ Schachter-Shalomi, *From Age-Ing to Sage-Ing*, 3

once was.”¹⁵⁴ These identity shifts expose many spiritual needs in which rituals of transition can address.

So what are the spiritual needs of the recently retired? Heschel, who was in the vanguard of retirement research, recognized three spiritual challenges: “(1) The sense of being useless to, and rejected by, family and society; (2) the sense of inner emptiness and boredom; (3) loneliness and the fear of time.”¹⁵⁵ These challenges are personal, not communal, struggles that create spiritual distress for the retiree. Retirement in these terms constructs a painful change in identity that the retiree often suppresses in order to maintain an equilibrium in their lives. Core questions that the Wise Aging program addresses include

“who on earth would I be without this job, this role, this status? If I can’t afford to leave my job can I make more time for myself to be with friends and family, or to relax and enjoy another activity, or to join a religious, activist, or social group? Can I begin to move in the direction of greater freedom?”¹⁵⁶

Additional issues of financial security and the interruption of social relationships join the list of pressing issues that accompany retirement.

In some cases, retirement is not a welcomed choice but rather a necessity forced upon the person. Sickness, family matters, and even ageism can push those in their sixties and seventies out of their work. In a story recorded by Rachel Cowan, two men in a wise aging group felt humiliated by reaching the ‘grey ceiling’ in their firms.¹⁵⁷ No longer

¹⁵⁴ Adelson, "Identity Transition at Retirement Age," 20

¹⁵⁵ Abraham Joshua Heschel, “To Grow in Wisdom” in *The Insecurity of Freedom*. (New York: Schocken Books, 1975), 75

¹⁵⁶ Rachel Cowan and Linda Thal. *Wise Aging: Living with Joy, Resilience, & Spirit*. ed. Beth Lieberman. (Springfield, NJ: Behrman House, 2015), 14

¹⁵⁷ Cowan and Thal, *Wise Aging*, 26

were these gentlemen rising in their careers but they had begun the eventual decline to retirement. The shame that can accompany retirement often suppresses any potential of acceptance of their new identity as a retiree. This perspective inhibits viewing retirement as an accepted and expected moment of transition.

Many people do not have enough or any preparation to approach this transitional moment. If one has the foresight and adequate tools to handle the new feelings that accompany retirement, they have a better chance of tackling questions regarding a painful modification of identity. Ritualizing the transition of retirement, therefore, can reaffirm meaning and a positive identity formation for the retiree. Identity transformation is a key marker of life cycle moments and “through ritualization we make routine a certain way of seeing, hearing, touching, and otherwise perceiving” this new identity.¹⁵⁸

Rituals have the power to reorient the retiree before, during, and after the chaotic and distressing shift in identity. Especially after the stress and identity change that accompany retirement, a reaffirmation of the retiree's future encourages the person to cross the threshold of this transition. Rituals can create a context to name the spiritual transition,¹⁵⁹ provide a safe container for ambivalence,¹⁶⁰ and allow for an active continuity in the years after retirement.¹⁶¹ The ability to see the world through a new lens creates a bridge that connects the before and after of the life cycle moment; rituals are the bridge between these two moments. Many expected liminal moments, such as the

¹⁵⁸ Driver, *Liberating Rites*, 135

¹⁵⁹Adelson, “Identity Transition at Retirement Age,” 59

¹⁶⁰ Dayle A. Friedman, *Jewish Visions for Aging: A Professional Guide for Fostering Wholeness*. (Woodstock, VT.: Jewish Lights Pub, 2008), 165

¹⁶¹ Susan Berrin, *A Heart of Wisdom : Making the Jewish Journey from Midlife through the Elder Years*. 1st ed. (Woodstock, VT.: Jewish Lights Pub, 1997)< 265

transition from Shabbat to weekday, also cause anxiety. But with proper forethought, this anxiety can be tempered. Recognized rituals such as Havdalah exist as coping mechanisms for this type of apprehension.¹⁶² The ritualization of transitional moments eases and reorients the person who crosses these boundaries through addressing their needs. Proper preparation and defining expectations throughout the transition create a “dynamic process as older people come to see themselves not as victims of life forces, or defined by their limitations, but rather as resilient, with the capacity and initiative to shape as well as be shaped by events.”¹⁶³ If rituals are used in these transitional moments, new identities can be internalized in a healthy manner.

The Jewish views of retirement have constantly evolved depending on the context of aging Jews, giving contemporary society the freedom to realign retirement with its values. Classical Jewish texts do not mention retirement as a critical life cycle moment because it was not until the contemporary period that it became a common liminal moment. Despite its silence, Judaism has always understood obligation and ritual performance to be unending. In other words, there is no ending point where Judaism becomes irrelevant or superfluous during one’s lifetime.¹⁶⁴ Mishnah Avot reflects a similar attitude, recording that as one develops a new identity with each new stage of life achieved.¹⁶⁵ This teaches that as one ages, there are new possibilities present and identity

¹⁶² Dorff, “Havdalah,” 31

¹⁶³ Walsh, “Families in Later Life,” 352

¹⁶⁴ Friedman, *Jewish Visions for Aging*, 18

¹⁶⁵ Pirkei Avot 5:21 - הוא היה אומר, בן חמש שנים למקרא, בן עשר למשנה, בן שלש עשרה למצות, בן ארבעים לפינה, בן חמשים חמש עשרה לתלמוד, בן שמונה עשרה לחפה, בן עשרים לרדף, בן שלשים לכח, בן ארבעים לפינה, בן חמשים לעצה, בן ששים לזקנה, בן שבעים לשיבה, בן שמונים לגבורה, בן תשעים לשית, בן מאה כאלו מת ועבר ובטל מן העולם:

He [Yehudah ben Teima] used to say: Five years [is the age] for [the study of] Scripture,

reformation is not only possible but expected. Shmuly Yanklowitz understands this mishnah to teach the positive aspects of aging. Aging accompanies a growth of wisdom and sophistication that signals the increase of a person's value in society.¹⁶⁶ Regardless of a person's value at large, as they age, their professional worth is questioned. According to Numbers 8:25, at the age of 50, the Levites are forced to step down from their position as facilitators of the Temple cult.¹⁶⁷ The Torah states that the Levites not only have the option to but an obligation to retire. Rashi comments that older Levites are only barred from physical activity; for all spiritual tasks, they are still eligible.¹⁶⁸ In his interpretation, professional life adapts to the needs of the person as they age. Maimonides takes this notion one step further declaring:

וְאִין מוֹרִידִין לְעוֹלָם מִשְׁרָרָה שֶׁבְּקָרֵב יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶלָּא אִם סָרַח

Ten [is the age] for [the study of] Mishnah, Thirteen [is the age] for [observing] commandments, Fifteen [is the age] for [the study of] Talmud, Eighteen [is the age] for the [wedding] canopy, Twenty [is the age] for pursuit, Thirty [is the age] for [full] strength, Forty [is the age] for understanding, Fifty [is the age] for [giving] counsel, Sixty [is the age] for mature age, Seventy [is the age] for a hoary head, Eighty [is the age] for [superadded] strength, Ninety [is the age] for [a] bending [stature], One hundred, is [the age at which one is] as if dead, passed away, and ceased from the world. [taken from sefaria.org]

¹⁶⁶ Yanklowitz, Shmuly, trans. *Pirkei Avot: A Social Justice Commentary*. ed. David E. S Stein. (New York: Central Conference of American Rabbis, 2018), 356

¹⁶⁷ Num. 8:24-26

זאת אשר ללויים מבן חמש ועשרים שנה ומעלה יבוא לצבא צבא בעבדת אהל מועד: ומבן חמשים שנה ישוב מצבא העבדה ולא יעבד עוד: ושרת את אחיו באהל מועד לשמר משמרת ועבדה לא יעבד ככה תעשה ללויים במשמרתם:

(24) This is the rule for the Levites. From twenty-five years of age up they shall participate in the work force in the service of the Tent of Meeting; (25) but at the age of fifty they shall retire from the work force and shall serve no more. (26) They may assist their brother Levites at the Tent of Meeting by standing guard, but they shall perform no labor. Thus you shall deal with the Levites in regard to their duties.

¹⁶⁸ ולא יעבד עוד. עבודת מִשָּׁא בְּקִתְּךָ, אֲכָל חוֹזֵר הוּא לְנִעְיִלַת שְׁעָרִים וְלִשְׂרִיר וְלִטְעֵן עֲגֻלוֹת, וְזֶהוּ וְיִשְׁרֵת אֶת אָחִיו: — עַם אֲחֻזָּה, קִתְּרוֹ גִּזְמוֹ:

A person should never be removed from a position of authority within the Jewish people unless he acted in an unsuitable manner.¹⁶⁹

Maimonides views forced retirement of authority figures negatively and disallows it in his legal code.

The attitude towards retirement, in general, is still unclear. Judaism views aging with reverence as the development of identity through aging is something expected and beneficial for everyone. Considering these rabbinic perspectives together, retirement could become a significant focus of the Jewish life cycle. With the increased number of American Jews enjoying years of retirement, Judaism has the ability to help people process the loss and grief of retirement, too long silenced, and reaffirm meaning in the lives of retirees through ritual, especially that of Havdalah.

Havdalah can exist as both a private and communal ritual (as discussed above). With regard to retirement, both options have their benefits and drawbacks. The regular and expected changes in our lives, such as Shabbat to the weekdays, can be marked by private rituals because the stresses themselves are regular and expected. The irregular, grander transitions cause more distress and the dramatic nature of a communal ritual can match this need. A private, intimate ritual can ease embarrassment stemming from a distressing transition. Studies have shown that older generations desire “companionate bonds, social ties, and community connections” and communal rituals have the ability to meet these needs.¹⁷⁰ Life cycle rituals themselves do not create the transformation of identity; rather they mark the transition for the community to recognize and affirm.

¹⁶⁹ Mishneh Torah Vessels of the Sanctuary and Those who Serve Therein 4:21

¹⁷⁰ Walsh, “Families in Later Life,” 353

Address notes that rituals designated for the aging cycle “can connect us with the community and celebrate the importance and power of being in relationship with others, as well as that which we choose to call the Divine.”¹⁷¹ He continues by noting that these communal rituals reflect “a sense that Judaism teaches that we live not in isolation, that our lives are part of something greater than our own self and that the desire to see that and to celebrate this awareness increases as we age.”¹⁷² Retirement then seems like an ideal moment to share the awareness of the transition that aging presents within the confines of the community. Therefore, the ritual created below blends the two needs into a semi-communal ritual, one intended for a community of those going through the retirement process.

Havdalah is both past and future oriented making it a perfect ritual to be adapted for retirement. Havdalah, as mentioned above, regards Shabbat both as a retelling of the Creation narrative and a taste of the messianic world to come. As the new week begins, reminders of creation inspire the worshipper to continue the work of repairing the world through humanity’s divinely gifted creative impulses. Past and future conflate in Havdalah. The liminal space between one’s career and one’s post-professional life mimics the space between Havdalah and the new week. In a similar vein, retirement evokes “a *commencement* that both recognizes an end and marks a new beginning, which provides an opportunity for continued growth and new adventures.”¹⁷³ The focus on the

¹⁷¹ Address, Richard F. "Seeking Sacred Pathways: How Ritual Is Being Used As a Means for Spiritual Support." *Journal of Religion, Spirituality & Aging* 29, no. 2/3 (2017), 87

¹⁷² Address, 90

¹⁷³ Roberts and Friedman, *Clergy Retirement*, 20

past inspires the retiree to see aging and retirement not “as the age of stagnation but as *the age of opportunities for inner growth.*”¹⁷⁴ While their professional work is over, the retiree has the ability to be professionally productive in a similar field or find a new sense of creativity in this unfolding stage. Retirees are granted new opportunities that were inaccessible during their professional careers that can help them develop a sense of purpose. The promise of a different yet purposeful future in retirement allows for an adapted Havdalah ritual to mark this transition.

Havdalah also presents the opportunity for mindfulness which is another approach to ease the tensions that retirement evokes. Mindfulness promotes consciousness of the present moment. Rituals are a form of mindful practice because ritual moves the ordinary into the holy and connects the current moment with meaning and purpose.¹⁷⁵ Mindful practice challenges the retiree “to receive each new experience on its own and not compare it to past experience.”¹⁷⁶ Havdalah provides a moment to be present to the movement of time. Friday and Saturday appear on the weekly calendar but it is our responsibility to be mindful in order to bring in and move out of Shabbat.¹⁷⁷ Likewise, a retirement ritual creates the space to be mindful. It marks the change in time and professional status, and reaffirms purpose within a fluctuating identity.¹⁷⁸ In a

¹⁷⁴ Heschel, “To Grow in Wisdom,” 78

¹⁷⁵ Address, “Seeking Sacred Pathways,” 87

¹⁷⁶ Adelson, “Identity Transition at Retirement Age,” 53-4

¹⁷⁷ Goldstein, Elyse. “Havdalah in the Reform Context” in *Havdalah*. ed. David Birnbaum and Martin S. Cohen. (New York: New Paradigm Matrix Publishing 2017), 287

¹⁷⁸ Adelson, “Identity Transition at Retirement Age,” 15

conversation with Schachter-Shalomi, Sister Ann, who retired in 1985 agrees with the mindfulness frame for retirement. She says:

‘if we keep insisting on the old ways of perceiving and organizing life in elderhood, trying to control every minute in pursuit of our structured plans, we often cause ourselves pain and frustration. But we can discover a lot of unexpected delights by living in the present moment, which mystics around the world tell us is the gateway to eternity.’¹⁷⁹

Mindfulness restates purpose in the lives of recently retired persons. Through releasing control as exercised in the past and becoming aware of the present possibilities before them, retirees can ease the pains of transition caused by retirement.

In the Jewish life cycle, retirement can become a means to highlight the reemergence of elderhood in the Jewish community. Biblical and rabbinic texts presents the prevalent notion of the elder as a wise leader, such as the elders of the Sanhedrin.¹⁸⁰ Contemporary Western society abandoned the model of elderhood as society valued productivity over wisdom and leadership skills. But as the productivity of those who are post-retirement increases, an opportunity arises to reimagine how retirees impact the Jewish community. Schachter-Shalomi viewed retirement as an opportunity to create sages, emphasizing “lifelong learning, brain-mind development, and consecrated service to humanity.”¹⁸¹ In this model, seniors have gifts to share with the larger community as the generation that has the most life experience. A ritual for retirement can celebrate the transition into sagehood reflecting that rituals “can be used to store and transmit information, across time and across generations.”¹⁸² Practically, retired persons have

¹⁷⁹ Schachter-Shalomi, *From Age-Ing to Sage-Ing*, 243

¹⁸⁰ See Num. 11:16-17

¹⁸¹ Schachter-Shalomi, *From Age-Ing to Sage-Ing*, 244

¹⁸² Driver, *Liberating Rites*, 26

more free time in which they can take on more significant roles in their local Jewish community, such as teacher or board member. The confirmation of becoming an elder can grant retirees “a sense of significant being.”¹⁸³ Harkening back to the biblical model, sages can add new leadership styles to a community; sages can be part of intergenerational learning, sharing Jewish and professional wisdom that can transform the nature of Jewish communities.

The Havdalah ritual that follows reflects a few assumptions about the retiree. This ritual is crafted for those who have chosen to retire without any impetus other than moving into this next stage of life. As mentioned above, there are many reasons why someone would retire. The ritual included below expects the retiree will anticipate many years to live as an elder. There is also a socio-economic assumption that retirement will not be a burden and the possibilities of the next stage of elderhood are not limited simply for economic reasons. While this ritual is created for this specific audience, it can be adapted to fit different reactions to retirement. It can be crafted to address the pain and loss of a forced retirement. And it also can sanctify this process for those who are retiring for health reasons. This ritual will come at the close of a retirement chavurah, a group of people within their first year of retirement. Through this chavurah, they will have the space to explore the transitions they are going through and look towards the future as they enter this new stage of life. Since this ritual is based on Havdalah, the participants will have a session where they learn *Havdalah al hakos* so they will be able to participate fully in the ritual. They will also be prompted in writing and delivering personal blessing

¹⁸³ Heschel, “To Grow in Wisdom,” 77

to be used during this Havdalah. The final session will incorporate this Havdalah ritual to mark the completion of the first year through of this transition.

Havdalah for Retirement

There is a cup of wine, a bag of spices, an unlit Havdalah candle, and a regular candle for every participant

Leader: We have gathered to mark this sacred transition from a professional life to the next stage of creativity and possibility. Like Abraham, called on a journey at age 75, we have been called to this next moment in our lives. We have met together this past year and have witnessed the sacred power of community, sharing our anxieties and our joys for this new chapter. Judaism teaches that when we reach a milestone, we never simply move on with our lives. Rather these moments shape us from then on. Our tradition teaches us to say הדרן עלך (*hadran 'alakh*) - we will return to this moment - and הדרך עלן (*hadrakh 'alan*) - this moment will return to us. As we enter this new stage of life, we recall our decades of professional service to guide us and inspire us to continuously grow.

Prayer for the Journey by Merle Feld

Our lives are always changing, and change brings with it fear of the unknown.
The journey into the unknown is fraught with danger, yet rich with possibility.
It has always been so - as Abraham and Sarah went forth, as Rebecca and then Jacob went forth.

Our ancestors across time have looked to you for protection,
from the wild beasts of the road, from the vagaries of weather.

So too, we, in this place, in this time, look to You.

Help me to remember my strength and courage,
help me to see clearly, to listen deeply, to act wisely.

Help me to be my best self in this new place and time.

Every journey leads into the unknown. May the unknown ahead of me offer blessing.¹⁸⁴

Leader: This ritual is modeled after Havdalah, the closing ritual in which Shabbat departs and the week begins. Havdalah brings us comfort caused by the sadness of the departure of Shabbat. It eases us into the week while reminding us to keep looking forward, finding the possibilities in the week ahead. Likewise, with retirement, the core message stays the same: while we are no longer working full time, our dreams, ambitions, and opportunities can be achieved in new ways in this new stage of life.

¹⁸⁴ Found in “A Ritual for Retirement” by Center for Prayer and Spirituality at B’nai Jeshurun, New York City. 2018.

<https://www.bj.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Retirement-Booklet-2.pdf>

The havdalah candle is lit

Leader: We begin with a series of verses from our most sacred writings. We learn about the transition of power from the great prophet Elijah to his successor Elisha through the passing of the sacred mantle. Elijah retired with faith that the next generation would continue to work with integrity and passion. We learn from the only moment of retirement in Torah, when the Levites step down from their sacred obligations to both allow the next generation to assume responsibility to learn for themselves how to participate in serving the Divine in a new way. We will then read a selection of verses from Psalms, Proverbs and a prophecy from Joel which teach us how to attribute wisdom, perseverance, and success to elderhood.

II Kings 2:1

Elijah and Elisha had set out

מלכים ב' ב':א'

וַיֵּלֶךְ אֵלֵיהֶוּ וְאֵלִישָׁעַ

II Kings 2:9

Elisha answered, "Let a double portion of your spirit pass on to me."

מלכים ב' ב':ט'

וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלִישָׁעַ וַיְהִי־נָא פִּי־שְׁנַיִם בְּרוּחְךָ אֵלַי:

II Kings 2:13

He picked up Elijah's mantle,

מלכים ב' ב':י"ג

וַיִּקַּח אֶת־אֲדָמַת אֵלֵיהֶוּ

Numbers 8:24-25

From twenty-five years of age up they shall participate in the workforce in the service of the Tent of Meeting; but at the age of fifty they shall retire from the work force

במדבר ח':כ"ד-כ"ה

מִבֶּן חָמֵשׁ וְעֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה וְמַעְלָה יָבוֹא לַעֲבֹד אֶת־צִבְיָא בְּעִבְדֵּת אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד: וּמִבֶּן חֲמִשִּׁים שָׁנָה יָשׁוּב מֵעֲבֹדָה

Psalms 90:12

Teach us to count our days rightly, that we may obtain a wise heart.

תהילים צ':י"ב

לְמִנּוֹת יְמֵינוּ כֵּן הוֹדַע וְנִבֵּא לִבְּב חֲכָמָה:

Psalms 71:8-9

My mouth is full of praise to You, glorifying You all day long. Do not cast me off in old age; when my strength fails, do not forsake me!

תהילים ע"א:ח'-ט'

יִמְלֵא פִי תְהִלָּתְךָ כָּל־יְמֵי חַיֵּי וְתִפְאַרְתְּךָ: אֶל־תִּשְׁלִיכֵנִי לַעֲת זָקְנָה כִּכְלֹת כֹּחִי: אֶל־תַּעֲזֹבֵנִי:

Proverbs 16:31

Gray hair is a crown of glory; It is attained by the way of righteousness.

משלי ט"ז:ל"א

עֲטֻרַת תִּפְאַרֶת שִׁיבָה בְּדֶרֶךְ צְדָקָה תִּמָּצֵא:

Joel 3:1

Your elderly shall dream dreams, And your youth shall see visions.

יואל ג':א'

זקניכם חלמות יחלמו ובחורייכם חזיונות יראו:

Psalms 1:3

They are like a tree planted beside streams of water, which yields its fruit in season, whose foliage never fades, and whatever it produces thrives.

תהילים א':ג'

והיה כעץ שתול על־פלגי מים אשר פריו יתן בעתו ועלהו לא־יבול וכל אשר־יעשה יצליח:

Psalms 92:13-16

The righteous bloom like a date-palm; they thrive like a cedar in Lebanon; planted in the house of Adonai, they flourish in the courts of our God. In old age they still produce fruit; they are full of sap and freshness, attesting that Adonai is upright, my rock, in whom there is no wrong.

תהילים צ"ב:י"ג-ט"ז

צדיק כפתור יפרח כארז בלבנון ישגה: שתולים בבית יהוה בחצרות אלהינו יפריחו: עוד ינובון בשִׁיבָה דְּשָׁנִים ורַעֲנָנִים יהיו: לְהַגִּיד כִּי־יָשָׁר יְהוָה צוּר יי ולא־עלתה [עולתה] בו:

Reader 1: Wine marks the holy moments in our lives. The holiness, *kedusha*, present within this moment grounds us in the present. We are mindful that as we leave our professional lives, we enter into the next stage of life: Sagehood. The sweetness of our professional life is carried with us as we remember fond memories of sweetness from before and recognize we will also find new moments of joy in the time ahead.

Raise the cup of wine and chant the blessing to Friedman's tune:

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, בורא פרי הגפן.

Barukh 'Atah, Adonai, 'Eloheinu melekh ha'olam, borei pri hagafen.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the World, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

Reader 2: When Shabbat departs, we must enter the new week with renewed vigor. The rabbis understood the spices as an antidote to the sadness and loss caused by the departure of Shabbat. Retirement might cause us to experience moments of loss and pain as well. But we must take the next step into this new stage with a strong sense of spirit. The scent of the spices give us that extra encouragement to carry the knowledge, professionalism, and joys from our professional and personal lives into this next chapter.

Raise the spices and chant the blessing to Friedman's tune:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא מִיָּנִי בְשָׁמִים.

Barukh 'Atah, Adonai, 'Eloheinu melek ha'olam, borei minei vesamim.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the World, Creator of a variety of spices.

Reader 3: The braided candle weaves together the experiences, knowledge, and wisdom we have gained throughout the years. Our memories have provided beauty and support. Now, they provide the opportunity to increase our light in the world. The multitude of wicks symbolize the myriad ways we can bring our passions into the world, from undiscovered hobbies to new time to spend with family and friends to sharing our wisdom with the next generation. Just like this candle aflame with many flames, we have and will continue to kindle the sparks of many people to find success and meaning in their personal and professional lives.

Everyone lights their own candle from the flame of the Havdalah candle.

Raise the braided candle and chant the blessing to Friedman's tune:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא מְאוּרֵי הָאֵשׁ.

Barukh 'Atah, Adonai, 'Eloheinu melek ha'olam, borei me'orei ha'esh.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the World, Creator of the lights of fire.

Reader 4: With our flames lit, we are crossing into this new stage of retirement. We recognize that with every change comes transition and opportunity, tears and laughter, sorrow and dance. As we say goodbye to the professional stage we know so well, we welcome with open hands and hearts the next stage of sagehood. With this blessing, we declare that there is a time for every experience under heaven.

Chant the blessing to Friedman's tune

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם המבדיל בין קדש לחול, בין זקנים לנערים¹⁸⁵, בין עת לבקורות לעת לשחוק בין
עת ספוד לעת רקוד.¹⁸⁶ ברוך אתה יי המבדיל בין קדש לחול.

*Barukh 'Atah, Adonai, 'Eloheinu melekh ha'olam, hamavdil bein qodesh lehol, bein
zkenim lene'arim, bein 'et livkot le'et lishot, bein 'et sfod le'et rekod. Barukh 'Atah,
Adonai, hamavdil bein qodesh lehol*

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the World, Distinguisher between holy
and mundane, between elderhood and childhood, between a time to cry and a time to
laugh, between a time to mourn and a time to dance. Praised are You Adonai,
Distinguisher between holy and mundane.

The leader takes a sip of the wine. Then, extinguish the Havdalah candle in the wine

Leader: We now take a moment to share our wishes and blessings with each other,
expressing hope for our futures.

Members will share their wishes and blessings.

Participants will blow out their candles

¹⁸⁵ Psalm 148:12

¹⁸⁶ Ecc. 3:4

Turn, Turn, Turn by the Byrds

Chorus: To everything (turn, turn, turn)
There is a season (turn, turn, turn)
And a time to every purpose, under heaven

A time to be born, a time to die
A time to plant, a time to reap
A time to kill, a time to heal
A time to laugh, a time to weep

Chorus

A time to build up, a time to break down
A time to dance, a time to mourn
A time to cast away stones, a time to gather stones together

Chorus

A time of love, a time of hate
A time of war, a time of peace
A time you may embrace, a time to refrain from embracing

Chorus

A time to gain, a time to lose
A time to rend, a time to sew
A time for love, a time for hate
A time for peace, I swear it's not too late

Explanation of Ceremony

Prayer for the Journey by Merle Feld

This poem is suitable for beginning the ceremony because it mimics the notions within the blessing of separation. It also ties in the theme of Abraham's journey from the beginning of the ritual. It allows the participants to see the next stage in front of them, now officially ritually marked, as one with possibility. Feld's poem sets the stage for the rest of the ceremony to come.

Preamble

- II Kings 2:1a; 9b; 13a
 - These verses recount the transition of power from Elijah to Elisha. They show the continuation of power and success beyond the individual and how one's role as sage and elder can come into fruition through retirement through the giving over of responsibilities to the next generation. As one biblical example of someone giving up their work, it appears appropriate to include in this ritual to ground this transition in Jewish tradition.
- Number 8:24-25
 - This is the only explicit reference to retirement in Torah. The Levites are called upon for service only for a certain period of their life. Once their time has been completed, they step down, allowing for the next generation to move into power. However, these older Levites are not banned from working but are free to do non-physical work in the Temple cult. Likewise, the biblical framework can provide a positive model for retirement as a period of learning to perform new responsibilities in life, dedicating more time to family, nourishing their souls so life has continued meaning, etc.
- Psalm 71:8-9
 - This psalm confronts the spiritual challenges that one is confronted with during old age. Aging through the next developmental stage demonstrates "that one can never rely upon the spiritual skills learned in youth to meet the challenges of adulthood."¹⁸⁷ As the psalm progresses, the psalmist pleads with God to still be with them during this transitional moment, as highlighted in this verse. The psalm ends with the confidence that the relationship between the psalmist and God will remain intact through the

¹⁸⁷ *The Koren Tehilim*. The Rohn Family Ed. (Jerusalem: Koren Publishers, 2015), 348

later stages of their life. So as the retiree accepts their transition into elderhood, they confirm they will find new ways to meet the challenges of elderhood.

- Psalm 90:12
 - This psalm wonders about the finiteness of the human experience. Humans are limited in comparison to God's eternal existence.¹⁸⁸ And while the psalmist worries about their mortality, they desire to gain the most out of their future. Despite the pain and confusion of life, a sense of security can help keep a retiree moving forward, looking towards the future with a sense of possibility and potential.
- Leviticus 19:32
 - A constant trope throughout Torah is the call to honor the elderly. This line represents the emergence of elderhood for the retiree, as explained through Schachter-Shalomi's model of sagehood. As they assume this new position, they can receive honor given to the elder is received.
- Proverb 16:31
 - This verse from Proverbs describes the honor and benefits of aging. This verse suggests that "righteousness is supposed to be the path to a long life. Hence old age is an indicator of virtue."¹⁸⁹ This perspective counteracts the social stigmas that describe retirement through negative terms. This verse connects to the Abraham narrative where despite his age, he performed acts of justice throughout his life (i.e. in response to Sodom and Gomorrah). Likewise, retirement can present positive possibilities for retirees that allow them to change the world, on both a large and small scale.
- Joel 3:1
 - After the divine judgments in the first half of the Book of Joel, the prophet switches to moments of reconciliation. This passage discusses the return of God's communication with the Israelites.¹⁹⁰ No matter the past, the future holds potential for one with the right mindset. This focus on

¹⁸⁸ Alter, Robert. *The Book of Psalms: A Translation with Commentary*. First ed. (New York: W.W. Norton, 2007), 319

¹⁸⁹ *The Jewish Study Bible*. ed. by Adele Berlin and Marc Zvi Brettler. Second ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 1463

¹⁹⁰ *The Jewish Study Bible*, 1161

mindset translates well to the retiree who is entering a new stage. This stage can be one of reconciliation with their past deeds, both good and bad. It can help the retiree reorient their lives for the next stage they are entering, recognizing that the potential for growth and learning is still available. Retirees are still dreamers who can change the future.

- Psalm 1:3
 - This psalm discusses humans through the metaphor of a tree. This metaphor of the tree flourishing holds deep meaning to the psalmist who lived “in a semi-arid climate, [... who] recognized that a tree had to be near a water source to flourish, and this becomes a standard metaphor for perdurable success, fruitfulness, blessing.”¹⁹¹ Retirees seeing themselves as a tree in an unknown and possibly difficult future, can reinforce the idea that they too can become successful and are worthy of receiving blessing.
- Psalm 92:13-16
 - This psalm recited on Shabbat might be a familiar piece of liturgy for the retiree, therefore making this a good section to conclude the preamble. This final section of the psalm tells of a tree that despite old age still is fruitful. Likewise, the retiree, despite their elderhood, has potential not only for success but also to produce and experience holiness in the future.

Blessing over Wine

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן.

Wine is an identifiable symbol of liminal, transition moments. The wine reflects the high level of holiness of this ritual, as Psalm 104:15 and Bavli Eruvin 651-b connects wine with happiness and blessing. The wine reminds the retiree of the sweetness of their professional life which is carried with them into this moment of transition. As they remember fond memories of sweetness from before, they will also find new moments of joy not tied to their professional life. Wine punctuates the many joyous transitions between stages in the Jewish life cycle and retirement should match this pattern as the entrance into the next stage of life.

¹⁹¹ Alter, *The Book of Psalms*, 4

Blessing over Spices

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא מִיְּנֵי בָשָׂמִים.

The spices within this ritual utilize the rabbinic notion of the extra soul. On Shabbat, there is a belief that everyone receives an extra soul to increase the joy and celebration of the day. When it departs at Havdalah, our permanent soul is saddened. The spices satisfy the soul and give it hope and joy for the week ahead. Likewise, the retiree will experience moments of sadness through this transition out of professional work. This pleasant smell is a reminder for them to also carry the knowledge, professionalism and joys not tied to professional life which can continue in their next stage. The future is unknown and the transition carries elements of pain. The spices connect the past with the future and act as an aid through the transition, encouraging positive memories for the retiree.

Blessing over Fire

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא מְאוּרֵי הָאֵשׁ.

The braided candle weaves together the experiences and knowledge the retiree has gained throughout the years. Fire is a symbol of knowledge and creation, harkening the biblical drama of Adam and Eve. The Mishnah crafted the blessing for the candle in the present tense to reinforce the notion of humanity's role in continuous creation. This ritual deviates from *Havdalah al hakos* in that the participants light their own candles from the central, braided one. The new flames symbolize the many possibilities now accessible to the retiree. Their professions have been a guiding light for the retirees up to this moment. Now retirees have the opportunity to light many new flames in the years ahead, actualized through the lighting of new candles. Their ability to mentor the next generation, to pass the literal and metaphorical torch like Elijah did with Elisha, is symbolized through the lighting of new candles from the central Havdalah flame. The candle represents potential for the retiree in this new stage of sage and elder in the community and this should be welcomed with the same awe and reverence given to fire.

Blessing of Separation

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם הַמְבָדִיל בֵּין קֹדֶשׁ לְחֹל, בֵּין זְקֵנִים לְנַעֲרִים¹⁹², בֵּין עַת לְבָבוֹת לְעַת לְשִׁחּוּק בֵּין
עַת סָפוֹד לְעַת רִקּוּד.¹⁹³ בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ הַמְבָדִיל בֵּין קֹדֶשׁ לְחֹל.

This blessing has been adapted to reflect the nature of the transition of retirement. The Talmud outlines many possibilities for the havdalah blessing, using its contemporary social and political truths to create their ritual. The creative interpretations of Marcia Falk and Rabbi Leila Gal Berner allow for a new blessing to be scripted, which uses the contemporary realities of retirement in western societies to create this blessing. The distinction between holiness and mundanity has been kept the same to both ground this ritual as a Havdalah-inspired one and also to mark the departure of the holy nature of professional life. The first new distinction is taken from Psalm 148 because it contrasts elderhood and childhood, thus implying there are different needs and realities for these stages. The additional verses were chosen from Kohelet, the Book of Ecclesiastes. Chapter 3 of Ecclesiastes acknowledges the many transitions and dichotomies present in life. This felt like an appropriate tie in with the closing song, “Turn, Turn, Turn” by The Byrds, based on the same verses. The new dichotomies chosen refer to both the loss (crying and mourning) and the opportunity (laughing and dancing) which are very present with retirement. By naming the spectrum of emotions experienced through the retirement process, this blessing can be a source of comfort and hope, just as it was envisioned to be for the Shabbat Havdalah.

Closing Song: “Turn, Turn, Turn” by The Byrds

This song perfectly fits as the concluding song for this ritual. “Turn, Turn, Turn” by The Byrds would resonate with many contemporary retirees because they would have listened to this popular song when they were beginning their professional lives, hitting the top of the charts in 1965. The closing songs of Havdalah reflect upon the themes of the ritual and project them into the future lives of the worshipper. Based on Ecclesiastes 3, it speaks of the duality of life and the passage of different moments and the experience of a range of emotions. It expands upon the distinctions included in the blessing of separation, taken from the same passage in Ecclesiastes. It states that while the professional time in the retiree’s life is over, a new stage is beginning.

¹⁹² Ps. 148:12

¹⁹³ Ecc. 3:4

Chapter 3: Physical Transitions: יציאת הארץ - Departure from Israel

Physical Transitions: Organized Trips to Israel

‘Go forth from your native land and from your father’s house to the land that I will show you.’¹⁹⁴ This command from God to Abram begins the story of a connection between the Jewish People and a plot of land called Israel. Confirmed again to Abraham when he establishes a covenant with God, and restated for Isaac and Jacob,¹⁹⁵ the Torah connects the Jewish People with a plot of land in the Middle East. The drama of Torah and the continuing narrative in Tanakh describe a people’s conquest of and establishment of a society in this land. While this land has taken many geographic and political shapes, Israel became a key component of early Jewish theology. Since the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE, Israel as a homeland for the Jews has been buried within the Jewish psyche. The Zionist thinkers actualized the dream of returning to it.

Why does Israel hold a distinctive place in the Jewish consciousness? Israel was the place where the Jewish People established themselves through political, social and religious institutions. In response to the exile from the land by the Romans, Jewish liturgy retained Israel as an idyllic reality, a place where the exiles would eventually return and reestablish their society. As history progressed and Jews established communities across the globe, Israel was not the only land that held prominence for the Jewish people. Babylon was the seat of Jewish intellectual life for centuries after the destruction of both Temples and there the rabbis created the Babylonian Talmud, the basis of all subsequent Jewish legal expression. Centuries later many Jews had the opportunity to leave Europe

¹⁹⁴ Gen. 12:1

¹⁹⁵ See Gen 15:1; 26:3; 28:13

for the *goldene medina*, the United States, a land seen as the fulfillment of the messianic desire for universal ethics and culture.¹⁹⁶ For many, Israel was reduced to a symbolic place. But since the modern state of Israel was established in 1948, a clear and present connection between Jews and this land was no longer considered emblematic. Israel in the twenty-first century exists as

“a sacred symbol [...] But its sanctity lies not merely in the ossified residue of prior generations' religious, ethnic and nationalist projects—those messages that are taught in Hebrew schools, declared in federation General Assembly resolutions, and promulgated in films like *Exodus*. Rather, a sacred power newly created and perceived in the first-person is a continual part of the symbol's vitality. It emerges anew from the life experiences of people in every generation.”¹⁹⁷

The modern Jewish world considers the exploration of the the modern state of Israel as a pinnacle of Jewish identity formation. Travel to the land of Israel by Jewish groups reinforces the perception of the land as a distinctive place in the Jewish consciousness, a part of the common Jewish narrative across geography and history.¹⁹⁸ The long standing connection between the Jewish people and the land which has a vibrant modern actualization can be strengthened if viewed through a ritual lens.

Travel to Israel by Jews encapsulates the essence of pilgrimage rather than tourism. Tourism allows for a break with the normal routine when the tourist experiences something unfamiliar and different. As Shaul Kelner writes, “tourists don’t seek anything

¹⁹⁶ See 1885 Pittsburgh Platform found in *The Fragile Dialogue: New Voices of Liberal Zionism*. ed. by Stanley M Davids and Lawrence A Englander. (New York, NY: Central Conference of American Rabbis, 2018), 257-259.

¹⁹⁷ Shaul Kelner, “The Impact of Israel Experience Programs on Israel's Symbolic Meaning” *Contemporary Jewry*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (October 2003), 124-155
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/23455248>

¹⁹⁸ Serge A Lippe, and Central Conference of American Rabbis. *Birkon Artzi: Blessings and Meditations for Travelers to Israel*. (New York, NY: CCAR Press, 2012.), vi

of significance. Tourists seek a break from the daily grind.”¹⁹⁹ On the other hand, pilgrimages deal with “matters of spirit, of identity, of one's relationship with the divine.”²⁰⁰ Tourism lacks the transformation of self that accompanies pilgrimage. While a Jew can be a tourist anywhere, including Israel, a majority of Jewish travel to Israel offers a Jew a sense of pilgrimage due to the historical and theological affiliations. Travel to Israel aims to have a profound impact on the traveler or “to borrow a metaphor from science, pilgrimage is a catalyst, something that induces a transformation.”²⁰¹ These desired transformations permit individuals to see themselves, their Jewish identity, and Israel in new ways. Today, Israel is a salient component of Jewish identity. The ease of access to visit Israel in person has allowed this sacred symbol to influence the modern Jewish experience regardless of where one lives.

American Jewish institutions accept Israel as a sacred place and promote an enhanced relationship with Israel through travel and pilgrimage. This was not always so. The Union of American Hebrew Congregation distanced itself from Israel through the 1885 Pittsburgh Platform which denounced Zionism as antithetical to the religious nature of Judaism in the United States, expecting “neither a return to Palestine, nor a sacrificial worship under the sons of Aaron, nor the restoration of any of the laws concerning the Jewish state.”²⁰² Fifty-two years later, the UAHC could not ignore the realities of Zionism but interpreted the dawning of the establishment of the modern Jewish homeland as a

¹⁹⁹ Shaul Kelner, *Tours That Bind: Diaspora, Pilgrimage, and Israeli Birthright Tourism*. (New York: New York University Press, 2010), 9

²⁰⁰ David M Gitlitz and Linda Kay Davidson. *Pilgrimage and the Jews*. (Westport, Conn: Praeger, 2006), 5

²⁰¹ Gitlitz and Davidson, 5

²⁰² 1885 Pittsburgh Platform found in *The Fragile Dialogue*, 258

means to promote the “historic task to cooperate with all men in the establishment of the kingdom of God, of universal brotherhood, Justice [sic], truth and peace on earth.”²⁰³

American Reform Judaism viewed itself distinct from Israel but renegotiated a new position related to Israel in 1997. The Miami Platform reversed earlier statements deducing that Israel was irrelevant to the American Jewish experience. Within, the Reform Movement stated that Israel exists because “the eternal covenant established at Sinai ordained a unique religious purpose for *Am Yisrael. Medinat Yisrael*, the Jewish State, is therefore unlike all other states.”²⁰⁴ The Miami Platform confirms the understanding of Israel as a sacred symbol. But more so, in order “to deepen awareness of Israel and strengthen Jewish identity, we call upon all Reform Jews, adults and youths, to study in, and make regular visits to, Israel.”²⁰⁵ The Reform Movement expresses its goals to promote a relationship with Israel through experiencing the land in person. All other major Jewish religious movements promote a connection between Israel and American Jews through pilgrimage. The Rabbinical Assembly supports a Conservative presence in Israel through “Aliyah, longterm study and organized synagogue and personal visits to Israel”²⁰⁶ and the Rabbinical Council of America states that it urges “its members and their congregations to undertake visits to Israel with the goal of having

²⁰³ *The Columbus Platform 1937* found in *The Fragile Dialogue*, 263

²⁰⁴ “The Miami Platform” found in *The Fragile Dialogue*, 272

²⁰⁵ Miami Platform, 274

²⁰⁶ “Israel and the Middle East.” Rabbinical Assembly.

https://www.rabbinicalassembly.org/sites/default/files/assets/public/social_action/Israel/israel-and-middle-east.pdf

every member of our congregations visit Israel at least once.”²⁰⁷ Clearly, American religious life sees itself as connected with travel to Israel. Travel to Israel by Jews has a religious underpinning and therefore can be a richer religious experiences through the use of rituals.

Israel has meaning not only for religious Jews but for Jews with intellectual, cultural or ethnic identities as well. The early Zionist movement identified a Jewish homeland as the center of Jewish intellectual and cultural innovation. Ahad haAm, an early Zionist leader, saw the purpose of Zionism to be the establishment of a spiritual center in the land of Israel to allow “the creative Jewish genius” to flourish.²⁰⁸ For Ahad haAm, Israel enables the existence of an authentic Jewish expression unable to survive elsewhere. Thinkers aligned with him envisioned Israel generating a living relationship between the land and the Jewish consciousness. This mentality survives in modern perceptions of Israel. The Reform Movement in the United States believes Israel’s purpose is “to strive towards the attainment of the Jewish people’s highest moral ideals to be a *mamlechet kohanim* [a kingdom of priests], a *goy kadosh* [a holy people], and *l’or goyim* [a light unto the nations].”²⁰⁹ Israel endures in the Jewish psyche as a place where ethics, both universal and Jewish ones, flourish. Studies of short-term trips to Israel identify a preconceived notion held by both participants and trip organizers that Israel is a

²⁰⁷ “Support For Israel (1981): RCA Reaffirms Its Solidarity With The State of Israel.” Rabbinical Council of America. June 1, 1981.

<http://www.rabbis.org/news/article.cfm?id=101160>

²⁰⁸ Ahad Ha-am, “A Spiritual Centre” in *Contemporary Jewish Thought*. ed. Simon Noveck, (Washington, D.C.: B'nai B'rith Books, 1985), 51

²⁰⁹ Miami Platform, 392

"'model state' [...] that Jewry existed to fulfill a moral mission to humanity."²¹⁰ If Israel is to be an exemplar of Jewish values in action, visitors should become aware of their own ethical obligations.

The image of Israel as a spiritual center of Jewish ethics allows visitors to develop ownership over their Jewish practice and identity. David Gitlitz and Linda Kay Davidson note that "Judaism has a long tradition of transactional pilgrimages and enthusiastically embraces identity pilgrimages."²¹¹ In creating a travel guide for Israel, Lawrence Hoffman saw four key moments for the pilgrim in the process of spiritually charged travel: anticipation, approach, acknowledgment, and afterthought.²¹² These moments are demarcated by rituals throughout the pilgrimage to Israel, including moments to reflect on the holiness of the land and experience of travel. Throughout immersive experiences, Hoffman's process becomes essential as it demarcates the experience through rituals. Travel to Israel will explore the successes and failures of the ethical nature of the country. Consequently, the visitor will reflect back on their personal ethics.

Israel as a holy land allows for pilgrims to develop their relationship not only to ethics but also with Jewish history and peoplehood. The earliest Jewish texts understood the land of Israel to be set apart from all other lands. Deuteronomy described the land as a place which "Adonai your God looks after, on which Adonai your God always keeps God's eye, from year's beginning to year's end."²¹³ The early rabbis expounded upon this

²¹⁰ Kelner, "The Impact of Israel Experience Programs," 124-5

²¹¹ Gitlitz and Davidson, *Pilgrimage and the Jews*, 7

²¹² Lawrence A. Hoffman, *Israel--A Spiritual Travel Guide : A Companion for the Modern Jewish Pilgrim*. 2nd ed. (Woodstock, Vt.: Jewish Lights Pub, 2005), 49-50

²¹³ Deut. 11:12 - אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ דֹרֵשׁ אֹתָהּ תָּמִיד עֵינֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בָּהּ מִרְשֵׁית הַשָּׁנָה וְעַד אַחֲרֶיּתָהּ שָׁנָה

idea and found the land of Israel to sit apart from all other lands because of the many commandments tied specifically to that land.²¹⁴ The rabbinic attitude towards the relationship of the land to the Jewish People can be summed up in this line from Midrash Leviticus Rabbah:

מִדֶּד הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא כָּל הָאֲרָצוֹת וְלֹא מִצָּא אֶרֶץ שְׂרָאִיָּה לִנְתֵן לְיִשְׂרָאֵל אֲלֵא אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל, הִדָּא הוּא דְכְּתִיב: עֲמֵד וַיִּמְדֵּךְ אֶרֶץ רָאָה וַיֵּתֶר וְגו'.

The Holy One took the measure of all lands and found no land other than the Land of Israel worthy of being given to Israel as it says: When He stands, He makes the earth shake (Hab. 3:6)²¹⁵

Abraham Isaac Kook, a contemporary of Ahad haAm, also wrote about the holiness of the land of Israel in his writings. As a religious Zionist, Kook linked the land of Israel as linked to the theological underpinnings of Judaism. He wrote that

“since the source and foundation of the [Zionist] movement and our entire national rebirth comes, in truth, from the sacredness of the holy of holies which it emanates from the source of holiness and is based on the whole foundation of the holiness of the people, the holiness of the land and the holiness of its soul which draws from the word of God which is in the Torah”²¹⁶

His emphasis on the sacred nature of Israel comes both from the historical realities of the land and the uniqueness of the people who inhabit the land. While the Midrash presumed the physical soil to be a key factor to Jews' fulfilling a higher divine purpose, the holiness

²¹⁴ Mishnah Kelim 1:6 - עֶשֶׂר קִדְּשֹׁת הֵן, אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל מְקֻדָּשֶׁת מְכַל הָאֲרָצוֹת. וְמָה הִיא קִדְּשָׁתָהּ, שֶׁמִּבֵּיָאִים מִמֶּנָּה הָעֹמֵר וְהַכֹּפּוּרִים וְשֵׁתֵי הַלֶּחֶם, מָה שְׂאִין מִבֵּיָאִים כֵּן מְכַל הָאֲרָצוֹת

There are ten degrees of holiness. The land of Israel is holier than any other land. Wherein lies its holiness? In that from it are brought the omer [barley offering brought on the second day of Passover], the first fruits, and the two loaves [offered on Shavuot], which may not be brought from any other land.

²¹⁵ Leviticus Rabbah 13:2

²¹⁶ Abraham Isaac Kuk, "Sacred and Secular" in *Contemporary Jewish Thought*. ed. Simon Noveck. (Washington, D.C.: B'nai B'rith Books, 1985), 111

of Israel defined in Kook's theology comes from the ethnic identification of its inhabitants. The shared narrative of the historical and ethnic bonds of Jews creates the holiness of Israel. Because most Jews visit Israel as pilgrims, "at some point, it dawns on them that they are returning home - home to their history, home to their people, home to the place where it all began."²¹⁷ The Reform Movement agrees with Kook's notion when it states: "holy pilgrimage [is] to reconnect to the land of our people's physical and spiritual birth."²¹⁸ Israel, seen as a holy place within the Jewish psyche, forms and strengthens one's connection to Jewish history.

In addition to historical and ethical associations, travel to Israel generates a conversation regarding the Jewish relationship to power. Israel sees itself as a vehicle to express Jewish power through the self-actualization of the Jewish character in a modern, policial state.²¹⁹ Within Israel, Jewish identity and culture embodies the social and political hegemonies. Jewish power is expressed in ways unattainable in the Diaspora. The crossing into this heightened sense of Jewish sovereignty draws on the inherent connections between people, culture, place, and power to unite a global Jewish community that is both rooted and unrooted in Israel.²²⁰ Negative issues of power, mainly related to the occupation and conflict with Palestinians, also compel liberal Zionism to

²¹⁷ Hoffman, *Israel--A Spiritual Travel Guide*, 30

²¹⁸ "Resolution Encouraging Pilgrimage to Israel Among Reform Jews." Union of Reform Judaism. 2004.
<https://urj.org/what-we-believe/resolutions/resolution-encouraging-pilgrimage-israel-among-reform-jews>

²¹⁹ David Z. Vaisberg, "Israel: Projection, Potential, and Self-Actualization" in *The Fragile Dialogue: New Voices of Liberal Zionism*. Edited by Stanley M Davids and Lawrence A Englander. (New York, NY: Central Conference of American Rabbis, 2018), 187

²²⁰ Kelner, *Tours That Bind*, xvi

build a relationship between people and institutions that stands upon both love and critique of Israel.²²¹ Through building relationships, pilgrims develop a nuanced understanding of the political, social, and religious situation in Israel. Deeper associations with the world and the self both derive from collective experiences and permit groups of people to build bonds unachievable when one travels alone.²²² When pilgrims experience the successes and challenges of self-actualization in Israel, their role in the Jewish People becomes “part of who they are, a necessary segment in the story of their lives.”²²³

Currently, organized trips to Israel, such as Birthright and synagogue trips, see travel to Israel as a pilgrimage. Kelner studied the impact of Israel travel and viewed “the conceptions of Israel typically produced by these pilgrimage tours can be understood in terms of Durkheim’s classic theory of religion, whereby feelings of fulfillment and empowerment created by an intense group experience are preserved in symbolic residue that re-evokes these feelings.”²²⁴ Orientation sessions and religious experiences, such as Shabbat at the Kotel, are integral ritual components of these trips. These rituals delineate the program, enabling groups of travelers to become a “community of imagination.”²²⁵ But these programs fail to conclude with a ritual that accompanies the evolution of identity that stems from this pilgrimage to Israel. There are essential transformations - a

²²¹ John L. Rosove, “To Love and to Criticize: Diaspora Reform Zionists Must Make Our Voices Heard” in *The Fragile Dialogue: New Voices of Liberal Zionism*. ed. Stanley M Davids and Lawrence A Englander. (New York, NY: Central Conference of American Rabbis, 2018), 242

²²² See Emile Durkheim’s theory of collective effervescence in Kelner, “The Impact of Israel Experience Programs,” 144

²²³ Hoffman, *Israel--A Spiritual Travel Guide*, 30

²²⁴ Kelner, “The Impact of Israel Experience Programs,” 124-5

²²⁵ Seligman and Weller. *Rethinking Pluralism*, 118

changed relationship with the ethics, history, and people that enhance the pilgrim's identity - that can be acknowledged and marked in a ritual for ending a trip to Israel.

Rituals do not only, as ritualist Theodore Jennings states, transmit ancient knowledge but they also allow for the discovery of new information.²²⁶ Chip and Dale Heath, in a concurring study of many diverse moments that have an extraordinary impact, understood self-insight as a core component of ritual because impactful moments “rewire our understanding of ourselves or the world.”²²⁷ The sights and places become more than just spots on the globe; they express meaning that stretches beyond the self. Hoffman states that “a pilgrimage is an exercise in stretching your memory”²²⁸ and ritual concretizes the development of an elastic memory. Just as *Havdalah al hakos* developed to meet the needs of the Jewish People,²²⁹ a Havdalah for departing after a pilgrimage to Israel also fills a new religious obligation to understand pilgrimage through a Jewish lens.

In thinking about ritual possibilities at the end of a pilgrimage to Israel the resonance between the goals of pilgrimages to Israel with some of the themes of traditional Havdalah are striking. Havdalah traditionally marks a separation between holy and profane time though renditions recorded in the Talmud differentiate holy/profane along social and physical lines, such as the contrast between land and sea and earth and heaven.²³⁰ Rituals, such as Havdalah, allow for the acknowledgement of distinguishing levels of holiness and identity through relationships to others, including those with fellow

²²⁶ Driver, *Liberating Rites*, 187

²²⁷ Chip Heath and Dan Heath. *The Power of the Moments: Why Certain Experiences Have Extraordinary Impact*. (London: Bantam Press, 2017), 13

²²⁸ Hoffman, *Israel--A Spiritual Travel Guide*, 54

²²⁹ Bogage, “The Havdalah Ceremony,” 2

²³⁰ Bavli Pesachim 103a-104a

travel participants.²³¹ Through a concluding ritual, the travelers will fuse connections with each other and with the Jewish People at large, thereby enhancing their own Jewish identity. Havdalah already articulates identity distinctions through the phrase *בין ישראל לעמים*, distinguishing between Israel and the nations.

Havdalah also works well for a ritual of ethical reflection because as the ritual of separation, it addresses the universal spiritual and moral purposes of humanity.²³² Ethical contemplation is already a component of Havdalah which “offers the worshipper additional literary reminders of the need to maintain a moral and distinct life, especially at this liminal moment in the week.”²³³ Accordingly, a Havdalah inspired ritual would verbalize the ethical transformation of how the worshipper developed a fresh perspective on their ethical identity. Israel is a place where Jewish theology, peoplehood, and history intersect, and the departure from this place necessitates a ritual of separation.

As mentioned in the opening chapter, Hoffman explains Havdalah as a ritual of categorization since the Jewish concept of time and space is based on regular demarcations between different dualities.²³⁴ This ritual brackets the movement of a pilgrim from a majority culture to a minority one where the expected self-actualization of Judaism within Israel is replaced by another, competitive set of realizations are preached by the majority culture.²³⁵ Havdalah retells the narrative of this transition. The transition that accompanies a departure from Israel is both physical and spiritual in nature.

²³¹ Roy A. Rappaport, “The Obvious Aspects of Ritual” in Grimes, Ronald L. *Readings in Ritual Studies*. (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1996), 429

²³² Donin, “Havdalah: The Ritual and the Concept,” 72

²³³ Kaufner, “A Literary Approach to Havdalah,” 48

²³⁴ Hoffman, *Beyond the Text*, 32

²³⁵ Hoffman, 39

Havdalah elevates the seemingly ordinary experience to one which acknowledges spiritual transformations.²³⁶

To clarify, the ritual created below is not intended for emigration from Israel, colloquially known as *yeridah* (descending). The purpose of this Havdalah is for those short-term trips of Jews (i.e Birthright, synagogue and Hillel trips, NFTY in Israel) to continue exploring the many relationships they have with Israel as the group departs. Relationships to Israel, like all components of Jewish identity, are fused with the contexts and the formative experiences of the individual.²³⁷ A concluding ritual embraces the varied connections one creates with Israel on a pilgrimage. Simply by being in the land, one reaches a spiritual elevation similar to the heightened level of holiness that accompanies the arrival of Shabbat.²³⁸ Just as *Havdalah al hakos* ritualizes the transition from holy to mundane time, a Havdalah inspired ritual ascribes the movement from a holy to mundane land.

²³⁶ Yanklowitz, “Havdalah: A Social Justice Perspective,” 88

²³⁷ Danny Burkeman “The Seventy Faces of Israel” in *The Fragile Dialogue: New Voices of Liberal Zionism*. ed. Stanley M Davids and Lawrence A Englander. (New York, NY: Central Conference of American Rabbis, 2018), 132

²³⁸ Gitlitz and Davidson. *Pilgrimage and the Jews*, 7

הבדלה על יציאת הארץ - Havdalah for Departing the Land of Israel

Everyone will gather in a circle before boarding the bus to Ben Gurion Airport. There is a Havdalah candle, a glass of wine and spices native to Israel (i.e. rosemary, spices from the shuq)

Leader: This ritual is modeled after Havdalah, the closing ritual in which Shabbat departs and the week begins. Havdalah brings us comfort and eases us into the week while reminding us to keep looking forward, finding the possibilities in the week ahead. These past days we have experienced Israel. We have explored her physical beauty. We have met her inhabitants. We have been challenged by her practices and policies. We have stepped back through time and we have looked ahead to the future of the Jewish state. We have seen what it means for a land to be holy and the ways Israel remains a unique place for the Jewish community. As we depart from this holy place, we hope to continue to develop a nuanced understanding of the political, social, and religious situation in Israel and its relationship to our own identity as Jews.

Light Candle

Leader: Havdalah for Shabbat begins with a selection of verses from Tanakh. This Havdalah for leaving Israel begins with verses that describe the relationship between the land of Israel and the Jewish People. Just as the Israelites went to scout out the land, in Hebrew לתור (*latur*) the land, so we too toured the land. We have each built and developed our own relationship with the land. Our feet and our hearts have walked this land and we pray that our relationship doesn't end here but flies with us as we retell our trip through this הבדלה על יציאת הארץ, *Havdalah al yeṣi 'at ha'areṣ*, a Havdalah for departing the Land of Israel.

Numbers 13:2

Send people to scout the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the Israelite people;

במדבר י"ג:ב'

שְׁלַח-לְךָ אֲנָשִׁים וַיְתִירוּ אֶת-אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן
אֲשֶׁר-אֲנִי נֹתֵן לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

Ezekiel 11:17

Yet say: Thus said Adonai God: I will gather you from the peoples and assemble you out of the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you the Land of Israel.

יחזקאל י"א:י"ז

לֵכֶן אֶמְרָה כֹה־אָמַר יְהוָה וְקִבַּצְתִּי אֶתְכֶם
מִן־הָעַמִּים וְאֶסְפַּתִּי אֶתְכֶם מִן־הָאֲרָצוֹת אֲשֶׁר
נִפְצַוְתֶּם בָּהֶם וְנִתַּתִּי לָכֶם אֶת־אֲדֹמַת יִשְׂרָאֵל:

Deuteronomy 11:12

It is a land which Adonai your God looks after,
on which Adonai your God always keeps God's
eye, from year's beginning to year's end.

דברים י"א:י"ב

אֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ דֹרֵשׁ אֹתָהּ תָּמִיד
עֵינֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בָּהּ מִרְשִׁית הַשָּׁנָה וְעַד
אַחֲרִית שָׁנָה:

Numbers 14:7

[Joshua and Caleb] exhorted the whole Israelite
community: "The land that we traversed and
scouted is an exceedingly good land.

במדבר י"ד:ז

וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֶל־כָּל־עַדַת בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר
הָאֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר עָבְרָנוּ בָּהּ לְתוֹר אֹתָהּ טוֹבָה
הָאֶרֶץ מְאֹד מְאֹד:

Psalms 122

Pray for the well-being of Jerusalem; "May
those who love you be at peace. May there be
well-being within your ramparts, peace in your
citadels." For the sake of my kin and friends, I
pray for your well-being; for the sake of the
house of Adonai our God, I seek your good.

תהילים קכ"ב

שְׁאֲלוּ שְׁלוֹם יְרוּשָׁלַם יִשְׁלָיו אֲהַבֶיךָ:
יְהִי־שְׁלוֹם בְּחִילְךָ שְׁלֹוָה בְּאַרְמְנוֹתֶיךָ:
לְמַעַן אֲחִי וְרַעִי אֲדַבְּרָה־נָא שְׁלוֹם בְּךָ:
לְמַעַן בֵּית־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֲבַקֶּשֶׁה טוֹב לָךְ:

Reader 1: The wine in this ceremony represents the high level of holiness, *kedusha*, of this moment. Just as we as a group have explored the many ways the land of Israel is holy, we sanctify our departure from this place. We pray that the sweet and sour memories linger on our tongues as we never forget thee O Jerusalem.

Raise the cup of wine and chant the blessing to Friedman's tune:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן.

Barukh 'Atah, Adonai, 'Eloheinu melekh ha'olam, borei pri hagafen.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the World, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

Reader 2: We have been blessed with this opportunity to spend significant time learning and understanding Israel. We take these spices of Israel in our hands and carry them in our souls as a reminder of these experiences. As the smell lingers in our noses, let the memories that come to mind stay with each of us for a moment.

Raise the spices and chant the blessing to Friedman's tune:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא מִיְּנֵי בְשָׂמִים.

Barukh 'Atah, Adonai, 'Eloheinu melek ha'olam, borei minei vesamim.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the World, Creator of a variety of spices.

Reader 3: The braided candle weaves together the experiences and knowledge we have gained throughout this trip. Like the candle, we are interwoven as a group through this unique experience and we all added to our communal learning and exploration. When we reflect upon this trip, may we feel inspired by our experience to continue to explore our relationship to Israel and work for a time when she can be an *'or l'goyim* (a light unto the nations).

Raise the braided candle and chant the blessing to Friedman's tune:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא מְאוּרֵי הָאֵשׁ.

Barukh 'Atah, Adonai, 'Eloheinu melek ha'olam, borei me'orei ha'esh.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the World, Creator of the lights of fire.

Reader 4: Before we leave for the airport, we recognize that the land holds different levels of holiness for each of us. For some of us, the physical earth here holds special meaning. For others, the places we went to carry the mystery of this place. We struggle with the realities of the modern state because as a holy place we wish for the modern state to become a beacon of the highest forms of justice. May the moments we shared with the people here of all backgrounds remind us why this place must remain part of the Jewish conversation. Before we head to the airport, we say *להתראות/lehitra'ot*, see you again, to this holy place.

Chant the blessing to Friedman's tune:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם הַמְבַדִּיל בֵּין קֹדֶשׁ לְחֹל, בֵּין גִּבּוֹל יְהוּדָה לְגִבּוֹל בְּנִימִן²³⁹ בֵּין אֶרֶץ זָבַת חֶלֶב
וּדְבַשׁ לְכָל-הָאָרְצוֹת²⁴⁰. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ הַמְבַדִּיל בֵּין קֹדֶשׁ לְחֹל

*Barukh 'Atah, Adonai, 'Eloheinu melekh ha'olam, hamavdil bein qodesh lehol, bein
gevul Yehudah legevul Binyamin, bein 'ereṣ zavat halav udvash lekhol-ha'araṣot. Barukh
'Atah, Adonai, hamavdil bein qodesh lehol*

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the World, Distinguisher between holy
and mundane, between the border of Judah and the border of Benjamin, between a land
flowing with milk and honey and all other lands. Praised are You Adonai, Distinguisher
between holy and mundane.

Take a sip of wine. Extinguish the candle in the wine.

Closing Song: על כל אלה/Al Kol Eleh by Naomi Shemer

The honey and the sting,	<i>'Al hadvash ve'al ha'okeṣ</i>	על הדבש ועל העקץ
the bitter and the sweet,	<i>'Al hamar vehamatoq</i>	על המר והמתוק
and for our baby daughter,	<i>'Al betenu hatinoqet</i>	על בתנו התינוקת
my God, keep these for good.	<i>shmor 'eli hatov</i>	שמר אלי הטוב
The burning flame,	<i>'Al ha'esh hamevo'eret</i>	על האש המבערת
the pure water,	<i>'Al hamayim hazakim</i>	על המים הזכים
and the man returning home	<i>'Al ha'ish hashav habeitah</i>	על האיש השב הביתה
from afar	<i>min hamerhaqim</i>	מן המרחקים

All these things, all these	<i>'Al kol 'eleh, 'al kol 'eleh,</i>	על כל אלה על כל אלה
things,	<i>Shmor na li 'eli hatov</i>	שמר נא לי אלי הטוב
My God please keep them for	<i>'Al hadvash ve'al ha'okeṣ</i>	על הדבש ועל העקץ
good for me	<i>'Al hamar vehamatoq</i>	על המר והמתוק
The honey and the sting,	<i>'Al na ta'aqor natu'a</i>	אל נא תעקר נטוע
the bitter and the sweet,	<i>'Al tishkah 'et hatiqvah</i>	אל תשכח את התקוה
Please don't uproot saplings	<i>Hashiveni ve'ashuvah</i>	השיבני ואשובה
Don't forget the hope!	<i>'El ha'areṣ hatovah.</i>	אל הארץ הטובה
Return me and I will return		
To the good land.		

²³⁹ Ezekiel 48:22

²⁴⁰ Ezekiel 20:15

Explanation of Ceremony

Preamble

- Numbers 13:2
 - This verse begins the preamble because it is the first instance where the Israelites begin to explore their relationship to the land. In this narrative, twelve representatives scout out the land to see if they are ready to inherit and conquer it. While the ending of this narrative is not positive, this story allows Jews to grapple with their connection to the land. Also, it uses the word וַיִּתְּרוּ, which sounds like the English word ‘tour,’ which the group just completed. It also connects to the final blessing which uses part of Moses’ task for the scouts to understand the essence of the land.
- Ezekiel 11:17
 - Ezekiel also becomes a central part of the preamble because he discusses the separation of space rather than time.²⁴¹ In his prophecies, Ezekiel speaks of the historical connection between the land of Israel and the Jewish people and underscores the theological underpinning that this land was designated for the Jewish People. This verse discusses the notion of the ingathering of the Exiles to Israel. While Ezekiel’s goal was the reestablishment of Jewish life in the land, this ritual emphasizes that not just residing, but pilgrimage to Israel builds an important relationship with the modern state. Scholars such as Elie Kaufner compare Ezekiel’s theology to Havdalah and see many overlaps. Therefore, his prophecies suit this ritual.
- Deuteronomy 11:12
 - This verse understands the land of Israel to have special divine protection. This verse is the crux of the theological understanding that the land of Israel is holy. Because of this notion, a Havdalah inspired ritual is necessary for marking the transition of departure from Israel.
- Numbers 14:7
 - This verse comes from the report of the spies. Joshua and Caleb promote the positive nature of the land; a land that inspires blessing and goodness. Just like the participants on this trip, the report of their experience is a necessary a component of the trip (see Hoffman’s four steps from above).

²⁴¹ Kaufner, “A Literary Approach to Havdalah,” 47

- Psalm 122:6-9
 - This Psalm looks at Jerusalem as a place of holiness and praise. The final half of this psalm requests blessings to be given to the land and its inhabitants. Bringing a future-looking orientation, the opening section ends with the hope that the next time the traveler visits, the situation in Israel will be better.

Blessing over Wine

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, בורא פרי הגפן.

The blessing over wine represents the holiness of the ceremony. The cup of wine symbolizes a physical representation of the holiness in the world. While this ceremony focuses on the sweetness of holy moments, a sourness also accompanies wine, representing the disillusionment of the realities of the modern state. Both dualities remain present in this ritual as both these perceptions must be acknowledged in this ceremony. This blessing helps retell the emotions of the trip and hopes to allow memories to begin to solidify.

Blessing over Spices

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, בורא מיני בשמים.

Like the spices on Shabbat, these scents allow everyone to bring forward memories; the sense of smell is our most spiritual sense because it is intimately connected to memory.²⁴² The images and experiences become actualized in the spices which is why they should be spices that hold meaning for the participants. A memorable spice, such as spices from a local *shuq* (market), should be used. The organizer of the trip should ensure the participants have a moment where their olfactory sense is highlighted. The spices likewise bring joy as the participants depart Israel just as they are intended for at the departure of Shabbat. The departure from Israel can generate feelings of sadness and longing and the positive memories stimulated by the spices gladden the spirit as this moments ends.

Blessing over Candle

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, בורא מאורי האש.

The braided candle symbolizes the weaving together of the experience for the participants. For the close of Shabbat, the braided candle represents the many flames present within the fire for Havdalah. The grand narrative of the pilgrimage is told through

²⁴² Bogage, "The Havdalah Ceremony," 57

the weaving of the experiences and stories told by the participants. The braided candle reminds the group of their joint experience. Through the candle, participants see themselves intertwined in the narrative of the modern state of Israel while living elsewhere. Just as the Shabbat Havdalah candle inspires the worshipper to kindle physical and spiritual lights in the new week, this candle symbolizes the hopes that Israel can become an *'or l'goyim* [a light unto the nations].

Blessing for Separation

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם הַמְבַדֵּיל בֵּין קֹדֶשׁ לְחֹל, בֵּין גְּבוּל יְהוּדָה לְגְבוּל בִּנְיָמִן²⁴³ בֵּין אֶרֶץ זָבָת חֶלֶב וּדְבַשׁ לְכָל־הָאֲרָצוֹת²⁴⁴. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ הַמְבַדֵּיל בֵּין קֹדֶשׁ לְחֹל

This closing blessing has been adapted to express the physicality of the land of Israel. The Talmud outlines many possibilities for the havdalah blessing, using its contemporary social and political truths to create their ritual. The creative interpretations of Marcia Falk and Rabbi Leila Gal Berner allow for a new blessing to be scripted, which uses the contemporary realities of the modern state of Israel to craft this blessing. It draws on two distinctions from the end of the Book of Ezekiel as he expresses his vision for the future of the land of Israel. A key theme of the Ezekiel is his focus on holiness, especially the holiness of the land of Israel and Shabbat.²⁴⁵ Ezekiel states in his prophecy that there is an ethical and spiritual imperative to separate, coining the terminology found in Havdalah: “הַמְבַדֵּיל בֵּין קֹדֶשׁ לְחֹל.”²⁴⁶ The text, like the blessings above, make tangible the spiritual notions of holiness and deems the land to be the essential element to express the holiness in the world. Therefore, using this prophet’s words, this blessing defines two elements of the physicality of the land. The first verse comes from a long passage about the borders of the land. Just as the worshippers of this ritual have traversed the land, crossing the tribal boundaries, the blessing notes this with the distinction between the tribal lands of Benjamin and Judah. An earlier moment in Ezekiel’s prophecy confirms the theology that the land of Israel is holier than other lands. The text states this bluntly and seems like a fitting distinction to mark this moment. This blessing of separation does not place value or judgement on the difference between Israel and the Diaspora. Rather, it marks the heightened sense of holiness of the land of Israel for the Jewish collective. This blessing also reminds the participants of the necessity to continue forming a strong relationship with the land because as the boundaries between Israel and the Diaspora blur,

²⁴³ Ezekiel 48:22

²⁴⁴ Ezekiel 20:15

²⁴⁵ Ganzel, Tova. “Ezekiel: Introduction” in *The Jewish Study Bible*. ed Adele Berlin and Marc Zvi Brettler. Second ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.) 1035

²⁴⁶ Ezekiel 42:20 - See Kaufner, “A Literary Approach to Havdalah”

“the act of distinguishing between one entity and another always brings them in relation to one another.”²⁴⁷

Closing Song

The ritual ends with the singing of על כל אלה by Naomi Shemer. The closing songs of Havdalah reflect upon the themes of the ritual and project them into the future lives of the worshipper. Not only does this song describe its message through dualities (thereby making it fitting for a Havdalah ritual) but it illustrates the land and the culture of Israel. The lyrics describe the land of Israel in symbolic metaphors. Likewise, the worshippers will be departing the land and taking with them their own symbolic meanings about the land and its people. Like the song states, the goal is to hold all of Israel in their memories. As they return to their home communities, the hope is that they will be inspired to keep this relationship strong because of their pilgrimage. The chorus ends, “Return me and I will return / To the good land” demonstrating the wish that the participants will feel empowered and inspired to return to Israel.

²⁴⁷ Seligman and Weller, *Rethinking Pluralism*, 21

Appendices

Appendix A:

Havdalah in *Ma'ariv* Service²⁴⁸

אתה חונן לאדם דעת. ומלמד לאנוש בינה:

כמוצאי שבת ויו"ט:

אתה חוננתנו למדע תורתך. ותלמדנו לעשות חקי רצונך. ותבדל יהוה אלהינו בין קדש לחל. בין אור לחשך. בין ישראל לעמים. בין יום השביעי לששת ימי המעשה. אבינו מלכנו החל עלינו הימים הבאים לקראתנו לשלום. חשוקים מכל חטא. ומגקים מכל עון. ומדבקים ביראתך:

חננו מאתך דעה בינה והשכל ברוך אתה יהוה חונן הדעת:

Your grace humanity with knowledge
And teach mortals understanding

On Motzei Shabbat and Holidays:

You have graced us with the knowledge of Your Torah, and taught us to perform the statutes of Your will. You have distinguished, LORD our God, between sacred and profane, light and darkness, Israel and the nations, and between the seventh day and the six days of work. Our Father, our King, may the days approaching us bring peace; may we be free from all sin, cleansed from all iniquity, holding fast to our reference of You.
And

Grace us with the knowledge, understanding
and discernment that come from You.
Blessed are You LORD,
Who graciously grants knowledge.

²⁴⁸ Koren Siddur page 261

Appendix B

*Havdalah al hakos (Ashkenazi)²⁴⁹*²⁵⁰

Behold the God who gives me triumph! I am confident, unafraid; for Adonai is my strength and might, and has been my deliverance.

הִנֵּה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁוּעָתִי אֲבִטָּח וְלֹא אֶפְחָד כִּי עֲזִי וְזִמְרַת יְיָ יִי
וַיְהִי לִי לִישׁוּעָה²⁵¹

Joyfully shall you draw water from the fountains of triumph,

וַיִּשְׁאַבְתֶּם מֵיִם בְּשִׁשׁוֹן מִמַּעַיְנֵי הַיְשׁוּעָה²⁵²

Deliverance is Adonai's. Your blessing be upon Your people! Selah.

לִי הַיְשׁוּעָה עַל עַמְּךָ בִּרְכַּתְךָ סֵלָה²⁵³

Adonai Tz'vaot is with us; the God of Jacob is our haven. Selah

יִי צְבָאוֹת עִמָּנוּ מִשְׁגֵּב לָנוּ אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב סֵלָה²⁵⁴

Adonai Tz'vaot, happy is the one who trusts in You. O Adonai, grant victory!

יִי צְבָאוֹת, אֲשֶׁר־י אָדָם בּוֹטֵחַ בְּךָ²⁵⁵

May the Sovereign answer us when we call.

יִי הוֹשִׁיעָה, הַמֶּלֶךְ יַעֲנֵנוּ בְּיוֹם קְרָאֵנוּ²⁵⁶

The Jews enjoyed light and gladness, happiness and honor. So may it be for us.

לַיהוּדִים הָיְתָה אוֹרָה וְשִׂמְחָה וְשִׁשְׁוֹן וִיקָר כֵּן תִּהְיֶה לָנוּ²⁵⁷

I raise the cup of deliverance and invoke the name of Adonai.

כּוֹס יִשׁוּעוֹת אֶשָּׂא וּבִשְׁם יִי אֶקְרָא²⁵⁸

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יִי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְרֵי הַגֶּפֶן:

Praise to You, Adonai Sovereign of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

²⁴⁹ The only difference between Orthodox and Reform rites is the inclusion of “Miriam haNev’iah” in the Reform rite

²⁵⁰ Translation taken from *Mishkan Tefillah*

²⁵¹ Isaiah 12:2

²⁵² Isaiah 12:3

²⁵³ Psalms 3:9

²⁵⁴ Psalm 46:12

²⁵⁵ Psalms 84:13

²⁵⁶ Psalms 20:10

²⁵⁷ Esther 8:16

²⁵⁸ Psalms 116:13

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, בורא מיני בשמים:

Praise to You, Adonai Sovereign of the universe, Creator of varied spices.

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, בורא מאורי האש:

Praise to You, Adonai Sovereign of the universe, Creator of the lights of fire.

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, המבדיל בין קדש לחול, בין אור לחשך, בין ישראל לעמים, בין יום השביעי לששת ימי המעשה, ברוך אתה יי, המבדיל בין קדש לחול:

Praise to You, Adonai Sovereign of the universe, who distinguishes between the holy and ordinary, between light and dark, between Israel and the nations, between the seventh day and the six days of work. Praise to You, Adonai who distinguishes between the holy and ordinary.

המבדיל בין קדש לחול. חטאתינו הוא ימחול. זרענו וכספנו ירבה כחול. וכפוכבים בלילה.

May the one who distinguishes between the holy and the ordinary, pardon our sins; multiply our offspring and our possessions as grains of sand and stars at night.

שבוע טוב... (8X)

A good week, a week of peace, may gladness reign and joy increase.

אליהו הנביא, אליהו הנביא, אליהו הנביא: במהרה יבא אלינו עם משיח בן דוד:

May Elijah the prophet, Elijah the Tishbite, Elijah of Gilead, quickly in our day come to us heralding redemption

מרים הנביאה עז וזמרה בידה
מרים תרקד אתנו להגדיל זמרת עולם
מרים תרקד אתנו לתקן את-העולם:
במהרה בימינו היא תביאנו אל מי הישועה

Miriam the prophet, strength and song are in her hand. Miriam will dance with us to swell earth's song. Miriam will dance with us to redeem the world. Soon, in our day, she will bring us to the waters of redemption.

Appendix C:

Hamavdil by Isaac ibn Gayyat²⁵⁹

He who distinguishes between sacred and secular,
may He forgive our sins. May He multiply our
offspring and wealth like the sand, and like the
stars at night.

הַמְבַדִּיל בֵּין קֹדֶשׁ לְחֹל. חֲטָאֵינוּ הוּא יִמְחֹל.
זְרַעֲנוּ וְכֶסֶףנוּ יִרְבֶּה כְּחוֹל. וְכּוֹכָבִים כְּלֵילָה:

The day has passed like a palm tree's shadow; I
call on God to fulfill what the watchman said:
"Morning comes, though now it is night.

יוֹם פָּנָה כַּצֵּל תְּמוֹר. אֶקְרָא לְאֵל עָלַי גּוֹמֵר. אָמֵר
שׁוֹמֵר. אֵתָא בִּקְרָ וְגַם לֵילָה:

Your righteousness is as high as Mount Tabor.
May you pass high over my sins. [Let them be]
like yesterday when it has passed, like a watch in
the night.

צְדִיקְתְּ כְּהַר תְּבוֹר. עַל חַטָּאֵי עֲבוּר תַּעֲבוּר. כִּיּוֹם
אֶתְמוּל כִּי יַעֲבוּר. וְאַשְׁמוּרָה בְּלֵילָה:

The time of offerings has passed. Would that I
might rest. I am weary with my sighing, every
night I drench [with tears].

חֻלְפָּה עֹנֶת מִנְחָתִי. מִי יִתֵּן מְנוּחָתִי. יִגְעַתִּי בְּאַנְחָתִי.
אַשְׁחָה בְּכָל לֵילָה:

Hear my voice; let it not be cast aside. Open for me
the lofty gate. My head is filled with the dew of
dawn, my hair with raindrops of the night.

קוֹלִי בֹל יִגְטֹל. פֶּתַח לִי שַׁעַר הַמִּגְטֹל. שְׂרָאֲשִׁי נִמְלֵא
טָל. קוֹצוֹתַי רְסִיסֵי לֵילָה:

Heed my prayer, revered and awesome God. When
I cry, grant me deliverance at twilight, as the day
fades, or in the darkness of the night.

הַעֲתֵר נֹרָא וְאִיּוֹם. אֲשַׁנֵּעַ תְּנָה פְדִיּוֹם. בְּנִשְׁף בְּעָרֵב
יוֹם. בְּאִישׁוֹן לֵילָה:

I call to You, LORD: Save me. Make known to me
the path of life. Rescue me from misery before day
turns to night.

קְרָאתִיךָ יְהוָה הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי. אֲרַח חַיִּים תוֹדִיעֵנִי. מַדְלוֹת
תִּבְצָעֵנִי. מִיּוֹם וָעַד לֵילָה:

Cleanse the defilement of my deeds, lest those who
torment me say, "Where is the God who made me,
who gives cause for songs in the night?"

טָהַר טְנוּף מַעֲשֵׂי. פֶּן יֹאמְרוּ מְכַעֲסִי. אֵיךְ נָא אֱלֹהֶי
עָשִׂי. הַנּוֹתֵן זְמִירוֹת בְּלֵילָה:

We are in Your hands like clay: please forgive our
sins, light and grave. Day to day they pour forth
speech, and night to night [they communicate
knowledge].

נַחֲנוּ בְיָדְךָ כְּחֹמֶר. סֶלַח נָא עַל קֹל וְחֹמֶר. יוֹם לְיוֹם
יָבִיעַ אָמֵר. וּלְיָלָה לְלֵילָה:

²⁵⁹ Koren Siddur 727

Appendix D

*Havdalah al hakos (Edut Mizrah)*²⁶⁰

לפני ההבדלה יש נוהגים לומר:

Before Havdalah, the custom is to say:

Eliyyahu the Prophet, Eliyyahu the Tishbi,
Eliyyahu the Gila'adi - may he speedily
come to us with the Messiah, son of
David.

אֱלִיָּהוּ הַנָּבִיא, אֱלִיָּהוּ הַתִּשְׁבִּי, אֱלִיָּהוּ הַגִּילָאִי: בְּמַהֲרָה
יָבֹא אֵלֵינוּ עִם מָשִׁיחַ בֶּן דָּוִד:

The man who was jealous on behalf of
God; the man who was promised peace
through Yektuieul (i.e. Moshe Rabbenu);
the man who stepped forth and brought
about forgiveness for the Children of
Israel (Eliyyahu...)

אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר קָנָא לַיהוָה, אִישׁ בְּשֵׁר שְׁלוֹם עַל יָד
יְקוֹתִיאֵל, אִישׁ גֵּשׁ וַיִּכְפֹּר עַל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: (אֱלִיָּהוּ ...)

The man whose eyes witnessed twelve
generations; the man who was referred to
as "hairy" - as his distinguishing mark; the
man who had a leather girdle tied around
his loins. (Eliyyahu...)

אִישׁ דּוֹרוֹת שְׁנָיִם עָשָׂר רָאוּ עֵינָיו, אִישׁ הַנִּקְרָא בַּעַל
שַׁעַר בְּסִמְנָיו, אִישׁ וְאָזוּר עוֹר אָזוּר בְּמַתְנָיו: (אֱלִיָּהוּ ...)

The man who was outraged at the
sun-worshippers; the man who hurried
and swore there will be no rains from the
heavens; the man who withheld rain and
dew for three years. (Eliyyahu...)

אִישׁ זָעַף עַל עוֹבְדֵי חַמְסִים, אִישׁ חָשׂ וַיִּשְׁבַּע מִהֵיטָב
גְּשָׁמֵי מַעוֹנִים, אִישׁ טַל וּמָטָר עָצַר שְׁלֹשׁ שָׁנִים:
(אֱלִיָּהוּ ...)

The man who departed to find peace for
himself; the man who was sustained by
the ravens and did not die for the grave;
the man for whose sake the jug and the
pitcher were blessed. (Eliyyahu...)

אִישׁ יָצָא לְמַצּוֹא לְנַפְשׁוֹ נַחַת, אִישׁ כָּלְכְלוּהוּ הָעוֹרְבִים
וְלֹא מָת לְשַׁחַת, אִישׁ לְמַעַנּוֹ נִתְבָּרְכוּ כַּד וְצִפְחָת:
(אֱלִיָּהוּ ...)

The man whose admonitions were listened
to by those who yearn; the man who was
answered by fire from the high heavens;
the man after whom they said: "It is
Adonai Who is Adonai." (Eliyyahu...)

אִישׁ מוֹסְרָיו הִקְשִׁיבוּ כְּמִהֵם, אִישׁ נִעְנָה בְּאֵשׁ מִשָּׁמַי
גְּבוּהִים, אִישׁ שָׁחוּ אַחֲרָיו יְהוָה הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים: (אֱלִיָּהוּ ...)

²⁶⁰ *The Orot Sephardic Shabbat Siddur* - pg. 636-648

The man destined to be sent from the highest heavens; the man appointed to [be the bearer of] all good tidings; the man who is a trusted messenger to return the hearts of the children together with [the hearts of] their fathers. (Eliyyahu...)

אִישׁ עֲתִיד לְהַשְׁתַּלַּח מִשְׁמַי עֲרֻבוֹת, אִישׁ פֶּקִיד עַל כָּל
בְּשׂוֹרוֹת טוֹבוֹת, אִישׁ צִיר נֶאֱמָן לְהָשִׁיב לֵב בָּנִים עַל
אָבוֹת: (אליהו ...)

The man who proclaimed, "I was truly zealous on behalf of Adonai." - with pride; the man who rode horses of fire, and went up in a storm-wind; the man who did not taste death nor burial. (Eliyyahu...)

אִישׁ קָרָא קִנְאָה קִנְאָתִי לַיהוָה בְּתַפְאָרָה, אִישׁ רֹכֵב עַל
סוּסֵי אֵשׁ וְעָלָה בְּסַעֲרָה, אִישׁ שֶׁלֹּא טָעַם טַעַם מִיָּתֶה
וּקְבוּרָה: (אליהו ...)

Tishbi! Save us from the lions' mouths; herald for us good tidings at the departures of *Shabbatot*; bring joy to children together with fathers. (Eliyyahu...)

תִּשְׁבִּי תַצִּילֵנוּ מִפִּי אַרְיֹת, תְּבַשְׂרֵנוּ בְּשׂוֹרוֹת טוֹבוֹת
בְּמוֹצָאֵי שַׁבָּתוֹת, תְּשַׂמְּחֵנוּ בָּנִים עַל אָבוֹת: (אליהו ...)

The man called "Tishbi" i addition to his name - [O God,] make us succeed in Torah through him; let us hear from his mouth good tidings, speedily; bring us out of darkness to light. (Eliyyahu...)

אִישׁ תִּשְׁבִּי עַל שְׁמוֹ נִקְרָא, תַצִּלֵּחֵנוּ עַל יְדוֹ בְּתוֹרָה,
תְּשַׁמְּעֵנוּ מִפִּי בְּשׂוֹרָה טוֹבָה בְּמַהֲרָה, תוֹצִיאֵנוּ
מִאֲפֶלֶה לְאוֹרָה: (אליהו ...)

Fortunate is he who sees his face in a dream; fortunate is he who greets him, and he (Eliyyahu) answers his greeting. May Adonai bless His people with peace. (Eliyyahu...)

אֲשֶׁרִי מִי שֶׁרָאָה פָּנָיו בְּחֵלֹם, אֲשֶׁרִי מִי שֶׁנִּתֵּן לוֹ
שְׁלוֹם, וְהַחֲזִיר לוֹ שְׁלוֹם, יְהוָה יְבָרֶךְ אֶת עַמּוֹ בְּשְׁלוֹם:
(אליהו...)

As it is written: "Behold for I (God) am sending you Eliyyahu the Prophet before the coming of the great and awesome day of Adonai. And he shall return the hearts of the fathers together with [the hearts of] the children, and the hearts of the children together with [the hearts of] the fathers"

כַּפְתּוּב הִנֵּה אֲנִי שֹׁלֵחַ לָכֶם אֶת אֱלִיָּה הַנָּבִיא, לִפְנֵי
בּוֹא יוֹם יְהוָה הַגָּדוֹל וְהַנּוֹרָא: וְהָשִׁיב לֵב אָבוֹת עַל
בָּנִים, וְלֵב בָּנִים עַל אָבוֹתָם:

Open for us, Adonai, our God, this week and each and every week, gates of light, gates of blessing, gates of joy, gates of delight, gates of knowledge, gates of splendor and beauty, gates of gladness, gates of compassion, gates of grace and kindness, gates of good life, gates of goodness, gates of salvation, gates of atonement, gates of sustenance, gates of the study of Torah for its own sake, gates of food, gates of forgiveness, gates of consolation, gates of pardon, gates of help, gates of redemption, gates of good livelihood, gates of benefaction, gates of merriment, gates of pride, gates of complete healing, gates of peace, gates of tranquility, gates of Torah, gates of prayer, gates of repentance, [and] gates of deliverance,

כְּדַכְתִּיב וּתְשׁוּעַת צְדִיקִים מִיְהוָה, מְעוֹזָם בְּעֵת צָרָה: וַיַּעֲזֶרֶם יְהוָה וַיַּפְלֹטֵם, יַפְלֹטֵם מִרְשָׁעִים וַיִּוֹשִׁיעֵם, כִּי־חָסוּ בוֹ: וְנֹאמַר: חָשַׁף יְהוָה אֶת זְרוּעַ קִדְּשׁוֹ לְעֵינֵי כָל הַגּוֹיִם, וַרְאוּ כָל אַפְסֵי אֲרֶץ אֶת יְשׁוּעַת אֱלֹהֵינוּ: וְנֹאמַר: קוֹל צוֹפִיךָ נִשְׁמָע קוֹל יַחֲדוֹ יִרְגְּנוּ, כִּי עֵין בְּעֵין יִרְאוּ בְּשׁוּב יְהוָה צִיּוֹן: וְקִים לָנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִקְרָא שְׂכָתוֹב: מֶה נָּאווּ עַל הַהָרִים רַגְלֵי מְבַשֵּׁר מִשְׁמִיעַ שְׁלוֹם מְבַשֵּׁר טוֹב מִשְׁמִיעַ יְשׁוּעָה, אֹמֵר לְצִיּוֹן מֶלֶךְ אֱלֹהֶיךָ:

As is written: “The salvation of the righteous is from Adonai; [He is] their strength in time of distress. Adonai helped them and rescued them; He shall rescue them from the wicked, and save them, for they found refuge in Him.”²⁶⁵ And is is stated: {Let us say:] “Adonai revealed His holy arm before the eyes of all the nations, and [all people from] all ends of the world saw the salvation of our God.”²⁶⁶ And it is stated: “The sound of your sentries - they shall raise their voices together, and they shall sing out joyfully, for clearly shall they see when Adonai returns to Zion.”²⁶⁷ And fulfill for us, O Adonai, our God, the verse that is written: “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of he who heeralds - who announces peace, who heralds goodness, who announces deliverance - he shall say to Zion, ‘Your God has reigned.’”²⁶⁸

רִאשׁוֹן לְצִיּוֹן הִנֵּה הֵנָּה, וְלִירוּשָׁלַיִם מְבַשֵּׁר אֶתָּן:²⁶⁹

The first to [come to] Zion [will say:] Behold, [your children] are coming; for Jerusalem, [such] a messenger of good tidings shall I (God) appoint.

אַל תִּשְׂמַחַי אוֹיְבֵי לִי כִּי נָפַלְתִּי קִמְתִּי, כִּי אָשֵׁב בַּחוּשְׁךָ יְהוָה אֹר לִי:²⁷⁰

Do not rejoice on account of me, you who are my enemy, for though I have falled, I shall rise; for when I dwell in darkness, Adonai is a light for me.

לַיהוּדִים הָיְתָה אוֹרָה וְשִׂמְחָה, וְשִׁשְׁן וִיקָר:²⁷¹

To the Jews were were light, joy, happiness and honor.

²⁶⁵ Psalm 37:39-40

²⁶⁶ Isaiah 52:10

²⁶⁷ Isaiah 52:8

²⁶⁸ Isaiah 52:7

²⁶⁹ Isaiah 41:27

²⁷⁰ Micah 7:8

²⁷¹ Esther 8:16

וַיְהִי דָוִד לְכָל דְּרָכָיו מְשֻׁכָּל וַיְהִי עִמּוֹ:²⁷²
And David was successful in all his ways, and Adonai was with him.

וַנֹּחַ מָצָא חֵן בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה:²⁷³
And Noah found favor in Adonai's eyes.

כֵּן נִמְצָא חֵן וְשִׁכְלָ טוֹב בְּעֵינֵי אֱלֹהִים וְאָדָם:²⁷⁴
So may we find favor and success in the eyes of God and Man

קוּמִי אוּרִי כִּי בָא אוֹרְךָ, וּכְבוֹד יְהוָה עָלֶיךָ זָרַח:
Arise [O Jerusalem] and illuminate, for your light has come, and the glory of Adonai has shined upon you.

כִּי הִנֵּה הַחֹשֶׁךְ יִכְסֶּה אֶרֶץ וְעֶרְפָּל לְאֻמִּים, וְעָלֶיךָ יִזְרַח יְהוָה וּכְבוֹדוֹ עָלֶיךָ יֵרָאֶה:
For behold the darkness shall cover the world, and a thick cloud [shall cover] the nations, and upon you will Adonai shine, and His glory will appear upon you.

Hold the cup of wine in the right hand, and the myrtle (or other aromatic substance) in the left hand and say:

כּוֹס יִשׁוּעוֹת אֶשָּׂא, וּבְשֵׁם יְהוָה אֶקְרָא:

I shall lift a cup of [liberation for the] salvations, and call out in the Name of Adonai

אֶנָּא יְהוָה הוֹשִׁיעָה נָא (שְׁתֵּי פַעֲמִים):

We beseech you, Adonai, save now! (2X)

אֶנָּא יְהוָה הַצְלִיחָה נָא (שְׁתֵּי פַעֲמִים):

We beseech You, Adonai, bring success now! (2X)

הַצְלִיחֵנוּ, הַצְלַח דְּרָכֵינוּ, הַצְלַח לְמוֹדֵינוּ, וְשִׁלַּח בְּרָכָה רוּחָה וְהַצְלַחָה בְּכָל מַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵינוּ, כְּדַכְתִּיב יֵשָׁא בְּרָכָה מֵאֵת יְהוָה וּצְדָקָה מֵאֵלֵהִי יִשְׁעוּ:

Bring us success; bring success to our ways; bring success to our studies; and send blessing, prosperity and success in all our undertakings, as is written: He shall receive blessing from Adonai, and benefaction from God of his salvation.

לִיהוּדִים הָיְתָה אוֹרָה וְשִׂמְחָה, וְשִׁשְׁן וְיָקָר:

To the Jews there were light, joy, happiness and honor.

וּכְתִיב וַיְהִי דָוִד לְכָל דְּרָכָיו מְשֻׁכָּל, וַיְהִי עִמּוֹ: כֵּן יִהְיֶה עִמָּנוּ תָּמִיד:
And it is written: And David was successful in all his ways, and Adonai was with him. So shall it be with us always.

²⁷² I Samuel 18:14

²⁷³ Genesis 6:8

²⁷⁴ Psalms 111:10/ Proverbs 3:4

סבְּרֵי מְרַנְּנוּ. ועונים: לחיים.

Harken, our masters! (those present respond) For life!

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן:

Blessed are You, Adonai, Our God, King of the universe, Who creates the fruit of the vine.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא עֲצֵי (עֲשָׂבִי) (מִיָּגִי) בְּשָׁמִים:

Blessed are You, Adonai, Our God, King of the universe, Who creates various species of aromatic spices.

יְכוּפֶּה רֹאשֵׁי אֲצִבְעוֹתָיו הַיְמָנִים אֶל תוֹךְ כַּף כֶּשֶׁה־אֲגוּדָל מְכוּסָה תַּחְתִּיהֶן, וַיְהִיו כְּפוּפִים לִפְנֵי הָנֶר כִּנְגַד פָּנָיו, וַיִּסְתַּכֵּל בְּצַפּוֹרְנָיו בִּלְבַד וְלֹא בַתוֹךְ פָּנָיו הָאֲצִבְעוֹת וַיְבָרֶךְ (שַׁעַר הַכוֹנוֹת) בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא מְאוּרֵי הָאֵשׁ:

Blessed are You, Adonai, Our God, King of the universe, Who creates the illuminations of the fire

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, הַמְבַדִּיל בֵּין קֹדֶשׁ לְחֹל וּבֵין אֹר לְחֹשֶׁךְ וּבֵין יִשְׂרָאֵל לְעַמִּים וּבֵין יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי לְשִׁשֶּׁת יָמֵי הַמַּעֲשֶׂה. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, הַמְבַדִּיל בֵּין קֹדֶשׁ לְחֹל:

Blessed are You, Adonai, Our God, King of the universe, Who separates between the holy and the profane, between light and darkness, between Israel and the nations, and between the Seventh Day and the six workdays. Blessed are You, Adonai, Who separates between the holy and the profane.

Appendix E

Talmud Bavli Pesachim 103b-104a²⁷⁵

פתח ואמר המבדיל בין קודש לחול בין אור לחשך בין ישראל לעמים בין יום השביעי לששת ימי המעשה אמר ליה למה לך כולי האי והאמר רב יהודה אמר רב המבדיל בין קודש לחול זו היא הבדלתו של רבי יהודה הנשיא

Rava **began** his recitation of *havdala* and **said: Who distinguishes between sacred and profane, between light and darkness, between Israel and the nations, between the seventh day and the six days of work.** Rav Ta'akov bar Abba **said to him: WHY do you need all this? Didn't Rav Yehuda say that Rav said** with regard to the statement: **Who distinguishes between sacred and profane, and this alone is the *havdala* of Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi?** Why is this plain statement not enough for you?

אמר ליה אנא כהא סבירא לי דאמר רבי אלעזר אמר רבי אושעיא הפוחת לא יפחות משלש והמוסיף לא יוסיף על שבע אמר ליה

He said to him: I maintain in accordance with this statement that Rabbi Elazar said that Rabbi Oshaya said: One who decreases the number of distinctions in the text of *havdala* **should not decrease** them to **less than three, and one who increases** the number of distinctions **should not increase** them to **more than seven.** Rav Ya'akov bar Abba **said to him:**

ק"ד א

והאמר לא תלתא אמר ולא שבע אמר אמר ליה איברא בין יום השביעי לששת ימי המעשה מעין חתימה היא ואמר רב יהודה אמר שמואל המבדיל צריך שיאמר מעין חתימה סמוך לחתימתו ופומבדיתאי אמרי מעין פתיחתן סמוך לחתימתן

But the Master did not say three distinctions, nor did he say seven, as he actually mentioned four distinctions. **He said to him: In truth,** that is inaccurate, as the distinction **between the seventh day and the six days of work** is not considered a separate statement of distinction. Rather, this distinction is mentioned because it is **similar to the conclusion** of the blessing, **and Rav Yehuda said that Shmuel said: One who recites *havdala* must say** and expression that is **similar to the conclusion near the conclusion** of the blessing, to emphasize the connection between the blessing and its conclusion. **And the scholars of Pumbedita say** that one must say a phrase **similar to the beginnings of blessings near their conclusions.**

מאי בינייהו איכא בינייהו יום טוב שחל להיות אחר השבת דחתמינן בין קודש לקודש

²⁷⁵ Translation from *The Koren Talmud Bavli*, Pesachim. Edited by Adin Steinsaltz. Jerusalem: Koren Publishers, 2013.

With regard to the previously cited dispute, the Gemara asks: **hat is the practical difference between them?** Since the beginning and the end of a blessing generally address the same topic, what is the difference between these two opinions? The Gemra responds: **The practical difference between them is in the case of a Festival that occurs after Shabbat, as one concludes this havdala with the phrase: Who separates between sacred and sacred**

מאן דאמר מעין פתיחתן סמוך לחתימתן לא בעי למימר בין קדושת שבת לקדושת יום טוב הבדלת ומאן דאמר מעין חתימתן סמוך לחתימתן בעי למימר בין קדושת שבת לקדושת יום טוב הבדלת

The one who said that one must mention an expression **similar to the beginning of blessings near their conclusions** would say that one is **not required to say: Between the sanctity of Shabbat and the sanctity of the Festival You have distinguished,** before concluding the blessing, as the beginning of the blessing refers simply to the scrd and the profane. **And** accordingly to **the one who said** that one must say a phrase **similar to the conclusions of blessings near their conclusions,** one is **required to say: between the sanctity of Shabbat and the sanctity of the Festival You have distinguished.**

גופא אמר רבי אלעזר אמר רבי אושעיא הפוחת לא יפחות משלש והמוסיף לא יוסיף על שבע

The Gemara returns to the aforementioned matter **itself. Rabbi Elazar said that Rabbi Oshaya said: One who decreases** the number of distinctions in *havdala* should **not decrease** their number to less **than three, and one who increases** their number should **not increase** them to **more than seven.**

מיתיבי אומר הבדלות במוצאי שבתות ובמוצאי ימים טובים ובמוצאי יום הכפורים ובמוצאי שבת ליום טוב ובמוצאי יום טוב לחולו של מועד אבל לא במוצאי יום טוב לשבת הרגיל אומר הרבה ושאינו רגיל אומר אחת

The Gemara **raises an objection** from the *Tosefta*: **One says** statements of **distinctions at the conclusion of Shabbat, and at the conclusion of Festivals, and at the conclusion of Yom Kippur, and at the conclusion of Shabbat that leads into a Festival, and at the conclusion of a Festival that leads into the intermediate days of a Festival. However,** one does **not** mention distinctions **at the conclusion of a Festival that leads into Shabbat,** as the sanctity of Shabbat is greater than that of a Festival. **One who is accustomed** to reciting distinctions may **recite many** distinctions, **and one who is not accustomed** to doing so **recites only one** distinction. This ruling implies that there is no absolute requirement to mention more than one distinction.

תנאי היא דאמר רבי יוחנן בנן של קדושים אומר אחת ונהגו העם לומר שלש מאן ניהו בנן של קדושים רבי מנחם בר סימאי ואמאי קרו ליה בנן של קדושים דלא איסתכל בצורתא דזוזא שלח ליה רב שמואל בר אידי חנניא אחי אומר אחת ולית הלכתא כוותיה

The Gemara answers: **It is a dispute between tanna'im, as Rabbi Yoḥanan said: The son of sacred ones recites only one** distinction, but **the people were accustomed to recite three** distinctions. The Gemara asks: **Who is this person called the son of sacred**

ones? The Gemara answers: **Rabbi Menaḥem bar Simai. And why did they call him the son of sacred ones?** Because **he would not look at the forms on coins**, which were occasionally idolatrous symbols or some other prohibited image. The Gemara relates that **Rav Shmuel bar Idi sent** Rabbi Menaḥem bar Simai the following message: **My brother Ḥananya says** that one should mention only **one** distinction. However, the Gemara concludes: **And the *halakha* is not in accordance with** that opinion.

אמר רבי יהושע בן לוי המבדיל צריך שיאמר מעין הבדלות האמורות בתורה מיתבי סדר הבדלות היאך אומר המבדיל בין קודש לחול בין אור לחושך בין ישראל לעמים ובין יום השביעי לששת ימי המעשה בין טמא לטהור בין הים לחרבה בין מים העליונים למים התחתונים בין כהנים ללוים וישראלים

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: One who recites *havdala* must say distinctions similar to the distinctions stated explicitly in the Torah. One should not add other distinctions. The Gemara **raises an objection** from a *baraita*: **How** should one say **the order of the distinctions in *havdala*? One recites: Who distinguishes between sacred and profane: Between light and darkness; between Israel and the nations; and between the seventh day and the six days of work; between the ritually impure and the ritually pure; between the sea and the dry land; between the upper waters above the firmament and the lower waters below the firmament; and between priests, Levites, and Israelites.** This is an extended version of *havdala*, which includes references to seven distinctions.

וחותם בסדר בראשית ואחרים אומרים ביוצר בראשית רבי יוסי ברבי יהודה אומר חותם מקדש ישראל ואם איתא הא בין הים לחרבה לא כתיבא ביה הבדלה סמי מכאן בין הים לחרבה

The *baraita* continues: **And one concludes the blessing with the order of Creation:** Blessed is He Who arranges the order of Creation, or: Who orders Creation. **And others say** that one concludes **with: Who fashions Creation. Rabbi Yosei, son of Rabbi Yehuda, says** that **one concludes with** the phrase: **Who sanctifies Israel.** The Gemara explains its objection: **And if** what Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said **is so**, the distinction **between the sea and the dry land** should not be mentioned, as the term **distinction is not written with regard to this issue.** The Gemara answers: **Remove from here** the distinction **between the sea and the dry land.**

אי הכי בין יום השביעי לששת ימי המעשה נמי מעין חתימה הוא בצר חדא וליכא שבע

The Gemara asks: **If so**, the distinction **between the seventh day and the six days of work** should **also** not be counted in the tally of the distinctions, as it **is** mentioned only to repeat something **similar to the conclusion.** Consequently, this text of *havdala* **lacks one** more distinction, **and** this means that **there are not seven** distinctions in total.

אמרי כהנים לויים וישראלים תרי מילי נינהו בין לויים לישראלים דכתיב בעת ההיא הבדיל ה' את שבט הלוי
בין הכהנים ללויים דכתיב בני עמרם אהרן ומשה ויבדל אהרן להקדישו קדש קדשים

They say in answer to this question: The distinction between **priests, Levites, and Israelites is two matters**, i.e., it counts as two separate distinctions. One distinction is **between Levites and Israelites, as it is written: “At that time the Lord separated the tribe of Levi to bear the Ark of the covenant of the Lord” (Deuteronomy 10:8)**. A further distinction is that **between the priests and the Levites, as it is written: “The sons of Amram: Aaron and Moses; and Aaron was separated, that he should be sanctified as most holy, he and his sons forever” (I Chronicles 23:13)**.

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