

הבדלה · Havdalah · Separation

On Saturday night we add:

LIGHTS

ברוך אתה ייִהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
בּוֹרֵא מֹאֲרֵי הָאֵשׁ.

Adonai, our God and Sovereign, Source of blessings,
You create the lights of fire.

SEPARATION

ברוך אתה ייִהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
המבדיל בין קודש לחול,
בין אור לחשך, בין ישראל ליעממים,
בין יום השביעי לששת ימי המעשה.
בין קדשת שבת לקדשת יום טוב
הקדלה, ואת יום השביעי מושחת
ימי המעשה קדשת, הקדלה וקדשת
את עמך ישראל בקדשתך.

ברוך אתה ייִהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ המבדיל
בין קודש לקודש.

Adonai, our God and Sovereign, Source of blessings—
You distinguish the holy from the everyday
and separate light from darkness.

You give each people a place in the family of nations,
and thus distinguish Israel from other peoples.

You set apart the seventh day from the six days of creation,
the holiness of Shabbat from the holiness of festivals;
and You bestowed greater sanctity on the seventh day
than on the other six. Your holiness has brought distinction
and holiness to Your people Israel.

Adonai, our God and Sovereign, Source of blessings,
You distinguish between one holy time and another.

On all days, we continue:

ברוך אתה ייִהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
שְׁהִחְיָנוּ וְקִימָנוּ וְהִגְיָנוּ לְזִמְןֵ הַזֶּה.

Source of blessing, God of eternity,
Your majestic might fills the universe—
giving us life, upholding the life within us,
and bringing us to this time.





ארבעה בנים · Arba·ah Banim · The Four Children

We call them “wise,” “the one who rejects our rituals,” “simple,” and “the one who does not know how to ask.” But we all know that none of us is just one kind of person; we carry all of these traits inside of us. We do not read about the four children in order to set these types in stone or pass judgment on them. Instead, we read about them in order to remind ourselves that we each carry wisdom, an instinct to reject the past, simplicity, and a desire—if not an ability—to ask. Each Passover we consider these traits and how we wish to balance each of them in ourselves.

ברוך הַמָּקוֹם, בָּרוּךְ הוּא.
ברוך שְׁנַתְן תּוֹרָה לְעַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל,
ברוך הוּא.
בְּנֵגֶד אַרְבָּעָה בָּנִים דִּבֶּרֶה תּוֹרָה:
אַחֲרֵחֶכְמָם,
וְאַחֲרֵרְשָׁעָן,
וְאַחֲרֵתְמָם,
וְאַחֲרֵשְׁאַיִן יוֹדֵעַ לִשְׁאֹול.

Baruch HaMakom, baruch hu.
Baruch shenatan Torah l'amo Yisrael,
baruch hu.
K'neged arba·ah banim dib'rah Torah:
echad chacham,
v'echad rasha,
v'echad tam,
v'echad she-eino yodei·a lishol.

Blessed is the One who is all-present, all-embracing.
Blessed is the One whose gift to Israel is Torah.

Four times the Torah tells us:
Teach your children about the Exodus from Egypt.
Four times we are reminded:
“And you shall tell your child on that day. . . .”
From this the Sages infer that there are four kinds of people.
We call them “wise,” “the one who rejects our rituals,” “simple,”
and “the one who does not know how to ask.”



בָּסֶם מִרְיָם Kos Miryam • Miriam's Cup

בָּסֶם מִרְיָם – עַל שֻׁם מָה?
Miriam's cup—what is its meaning?

Miriam's cup is filled with water.

From the River Nile to the Sea of Reeds, our people's story ebbs and flows like water.

And so, it began with Pharaoh's order: "Every Hebrew boy that is born you shall throw into the Nile."

But one beautiful newborn was placed in a wicker basket among the reeds of the river. The baby's sister, Miriam, stood by and watched, to learn what would happen to him.

When the boy was found by Pharaoh's daughter, Miriam asked: "Shall I bring a Hebrew nurse to suckle the child for you?"

Naming the baby Moses, Pharaoh's daughter explained it this way: "I drew him out of the water."

From the River Nile to the Sea of Reeds, water is the sign of our people's birth.

Moses held out his arm over the sea. . . . The waters were split, and the Israelites entered the sea on dry ground; the waters formed a wall for them to their right and to their left.

Then Moses and the Israelites sang a song of celebration to Adonai. And Miriam the prophetess, Aaron's sister, took a timbrel in her hand, and chanted for the women.

Beyond river and sea, water marks the journey of redemption through the wilderness.

Into the bitter waters, a piece of wood was thrown—and it turned the water sweet and good to drink.

Encamped at the twelve springs of Eilim, the Israelites sated their thirst under seventy palms. Soon after, the manna rained upon them like bread from heaven.

And the same rod that split the Sea brought forth water from the rock for those who had doubted God's presence.

 Our seder tables hold a cup of wine for the prophet Elijah and a cup of water for the prophet Miriam. The fruit of the vine sustains our spirits, and water sustains our bodies. What is sustaining you at this time?