

Jubilee *Havdalah*

Optional opening song:

Hiney Mah Tov

Hiney mah tov umah naim shevet achim gam yachad.

הִנֵּה מַה־טוֹב

יְהִי מַה־טוֹב וּמַה־נְּעִים שְׁבֵת אַחִים גַּם־יַחַד.

How good it is, and how pleasant when we dwell together in unity

Leader:

This Shabbat, communities read from Leviticus Chapter 25 – the passage where the call to Jubilee is proclaimed. God commands us to hold a Sabbath year, every seven years, in which the land and the people were given rest. After seven cycles of the Sabbath year, the fiftieth year was to be a year of Jubilee. In this year, unpaid debts were released and people were freed from their servitude. It was a time to return to families, restore relationships and rejoice together.

Participant:

Jubilee represents a time when we are called to restore relations within our community, a spiritual and literal reorganization of community to ensure poverty does not continue from generation to generation. And in doing so, remake our relationships to our community and to God whole. The global Jubilee movement receives its inspiration from this biblical call to Jubilee, and emphasizes the interconnectedness we have as a global community.

Leader

The Jubilee USA Network, a part of the global movement, is an organization that continues to link voices of faith communities across the country with communities in the Global South – all of whom believe that we can transform our world and restore our relationships in the globe towards greater equity and justice.

This can be done by having wealthier countries like the U.S. cancel unfair debts of poor countries and to adopt just economic policies that allow countries in the Global South/developing world to invest in resources for their nations' citizens.

Participant:

Tonight, between each blessing we will share a few readings and stories from the Global South and the movement to inspire us to reflect on current inequality in the world as well as collective efforts towards change. As we mark the separation between Shabbat and the new week, we reflect on the barriers that separate us from achieving justice. We mark the ending of our restful Shabbat with this special Jubilee Havdalah service. We look towards the new week and our continued pursuit of justice.

Blessing over the wine

Baruch Ata Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha'olam, borei p'ri hagafen.

ברוך אתה, יי אלהינו, מלך העולם.
בורא פרי הגפן

*Blessed are You, Adonai our God,
Ruler of the Universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine.*

Leader: We have just blessed the wine, literally the fruit of the vine. This fruit is symbolic of the sustenance we need to survive. Let us take a moment to share the story of 12-year-old Elissa from the Global South – one person's story about hunger.

Participant: The story of 12-year-old Elissa is just one example of the ugly realities faced by many in poor countries: Elissa is the fourth child to Maria and Millo Masawe. The family of six lives in two small rooms on the outskirts of Dodoma, a city in Tanzania. A small stream carries a trickle of water and sewage through their community, which has no access to potable water, indoor plumbing or sewage facilities. The fields and roads of their neighborhood are perpetually dusty. Maria sews pleats by hand on traditional indigenous skirts. She earns 3,084 shillings (about \$2) per skirt for a job that takes 12 hours of uninterrupted sewing.

Participant: She has been getting the same price for three years from a contractor in the informal sector and says that if she doesn't do the sewing, there are many others who are willing to take her place. Millo, her husband, has no job. Maria's earnings cannot buy enough food for the family, let alone pay school fees for their children. One Tuesday morning, Elissa, the couple's fourth child, appeared ill to her teacher in a poor community school staffed by unpaid volunteers. Elissa kept rubbing her stomach and looked weak and dizzy. The teacher asked what the problem was and Elissa responded, seemingly embarrassed, "I have not eaten for two days." When the teacher asked why, Elissa replied, "it hasn't been my turn yet." When the teacher pursued the matter further, she learned that Elissa's family had only one meal everyday and, since they could only afford so little food, the family had been divided into two groups that took turns to eat, a day apart. That day in the evening, Elissa's group was taking its turn to eat.

Blessing over the spices

Baruch Atah Adonai, Elohaynu Melech Haolam, boreh minay visamim.

ברוך אתה, יי אלהינו, מלך העולם.
בורא מיני בשמים

*Blessed are You, Adonai our God,
Ruler of the Universe, Creator of all kinds of spices.*

Leader: The spices help us to carry the feeling of peace and rest of Shabbat into the week ahead. The spices represent a better future filled with the joys of Shabbat. Let us hear another story from the Global South, this time from Zambia.

Participant:

Kafue, Zambia:

Peter Chibize wiped the dust off a bench with a handkerchief and waited, agonizing over how he would convince the doctor to give him free treatment for his chest pains, headache, and bad cough. He had delayed his visit to the Nangongwe clinic in Southern Zambia because he could not pay medical fees until excruciating pain finally forced him to make the 12 mile walk from his village.

“Next,” a nurse shouted from the consultation room and the 67-year old nervously rose. Soon he was beaming when he was told that he did not have to pay for his treatment. Zambia scrapped health fees, one of the first benefits to flow from debt relief granted to African countries by the G8 group of wealthy nations.

“It was like a dream to me,” Chibize said. “Not to pay anything when you visit a clinic is amazing.”

Leader: As we bless the *Havdalah* candle, let us reflect on the light provided by our local communities’ greater access to healthcare, food, and basic services. Let us remember that while more and more communities in the United States have also had their social services darkened and cut due to “debt” that those in the developing world have experienced the same darkness, enforced by outside Western financial institutions, for decades and with greater impact and extreme poverty.

Blessing over the Havdalah Candle

Baruch Atah Adonai, Elohaynu Melech Haolam,
boreh mi'oray ha'esh.

ברוך אתה, יי אלהינו, מלך העולם.
בורא מאורי האש

*Blessed are You, Adonai our God,
Ruler of the Universe, Creator of the lights of fire.*

Participant:

The twisted candle contains many wicks working together to create a brighter glow than a single candle. The global Jubilee movement sometimes points to one day when through the working together of many people the conversation about cancelling debts to end poverty shifted. In 1999, 70,000 people formed a human chain around Birmingham in one of the biggest protests against world debt. The continued astonishing act of people-power around the world -- from Europe and the United States, and throughout Africa, Asia, and Latin America forced international leaders to cancel debt.

Communities across the United States took action and contributed to the movement's success. They continue to protest, send letters, make phone calls, and personally lobby their members of Congress and U.S. presidents. Together, we have helped pressure two administrations, both Republican and Democrat, to implement debt cancellations to help eradicate poverty.

Participant:

By the end of 2011, 26 countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America have seen most of their debts cancelled. The United States and other wealthy countries have helped to provide more than \$100 billion in debt cancellation to promote economic development and poverty-reduction programs.

Participant:

Debt relief helped to reduce Ghana's poverty rate from 40 to 29% between 1999 and 2006, and helped increase enrollment in primary school to 91% of students by 2006.

Nicaragua used its savings to increase investment in health by \$54.3 million and in education by \$121 million in 2007 and 2008.

In Tanzania debt relief has increased the number of children in schools by over 50%. In addition, almost 2,500 new schools have been built as well as 28,000 new teachers recruited.

In Zambia, we can think about the story just shared, where Peter felt such joy when he found out that the medical clinic had removed the minimal fee that had prevented him from seeking care.

Leader:

As we mark the passing of Shabbat into a new week, let us move together to act with other communities connected in the struggles for global economic justice. Let us strive to restore our relations between the globe, where equity between peoples and nations can occur.

Blessing of Havdalah

Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheinu melech haolam,
hamavdil bein kodesh l'hol

ברוך אתה, יי אלהינו, מלך העולם.
המבדיל בין קדש לחול.

*Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the Universe,
Who distinguishes between sacred and ordinary*

Sip the wine or grape juice. Extinguish the Havdalah candle in the remaining wine/juice.

Leader can facilitate singing of *Eliyahu Hanavi* and/or move onto community dialogue.

Eliyahu Hanavi

Eliyahu hanavi,
Eliyahu hatishbi,
Eliyahu hagiladi.

אֱלִיָּהוּ הַנָּבִיא, אֱלִיָּהוּ הַתְּשֻׁבִי, אֱלִיָּהוּ הַגִּלְעָדִי.
בְּמַהֲרָה בְיָמֵינוּ, יָבוֹא אֵלֵינוּ, עִם מְשִׁיחַ בֶּן־דָּוִד.

Bimheirah b'yameinu,
yavo eileinu,
im Mashiach ben David.

Leader:

Now that we have officially ended Shabbat together as a community, I ask us to join in further dialogue about the stories and reflections that were just read.

Facilitator Guide for further group dialogue and discussion:

After the *Havdalah* candle is extinguished, go around the circle and have people share their thoughts:

- Ask people to share their thoughts about the short stories that were read.
- What do people think about the idea of cancelling debts, redistributing land, and freeing slaves meant for communities in biblical times?
- What does pursuing this type of Jubilee in contemporary times mean in restoring our relationships in our local communities? In our nation? In the whole world?
- In what ways are our communities increasingly globally connected? What responsibilities do we have as global citizens?
- How can we act locally as a community now and in the future?

Facilitator Conclusion:

We just marked the end of Shabbat in our community, other communities around the country have taken actions in unity to bring about global economic justice too. This gathering is one of many, meant to pressure and build momentum in education, action and vision towards envisioning another possible world. One rooted in justice, equity, and a more just and moral economy.

As we increasingly live in a global community, we can continue to act to restore our relationships with those who face extreme poverty and injustice in the Global South/developing world. The Jewish community is no stranger to social justice work. And while many of us do not necessarily follow all of the laws of the Torah – we can easily think about the intentions behind a Jubilee. It is a way that we can continue to honor our relationships with one another in our local and global community.

Concluding action options for facilitator:

- Pass around a petition that can be signed relating to the Jubilee Act or the G8/G20
- Gather together the community present and take a photograph holding up a sign that calls for debt cancellation, transformed financial system and global economic justice!
- Pass around sign ups to make your community a long lasting partner in the Jubilee movement