

# Home Ritual of Shabbat Series, Part 4

## Havdalah

By Rabbi Phil Kaplan

### The Mitzvah of Havdalah

1) Genesis 1:4

God saw that the light was good, and God separated the light from the darkness.

2) Siddur Ashkenaz, Shabbat, Havdalah

Blessed are You, God, our Lord, King of the universe, who separates between the holy and the profane; between the light and dark; between Israel and the other nations; between the seventh day and the six days of the week. Blessed are You, God, who separates between the holy and the profane.

3) Sefer Mitzvot Gadol, Positive Mitzvot #29

It is a positive mitzvah from the Torah to sanctify the sabbath day with words and so says scripture explicitly "Remember the sabbath"...and it needs to be remembered at its entry with kiddush and at its leaving with havdalah.

4) Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 296:1

The order of Havdalah: Wine, spices, candle, separation. Its acronym is YaBNeH (Yayin, Besamim, Ner, Havdalah). And one must be careful that the cup is not spoiled. *Rama: And it is customary to say before Havdalah that is done at home, "Behold the God of my salvation . . .", "The cup of salvation I raise . . .", "The Jews had light . . ." as a good omen. And at the time of Havdalah one should look at the cup and the candle. And it is customary to spill a little wine on the ground, before one says the blessing, so that the cup will not be spoiled. The reason for spilling the wine? Because it is said, "Any home where wine is not poured out like water is not blessed," so we do this as a good omen at the beginning of the week. And we pour some from the cup after Havdalah, and extinguish the candle in it, because of the delight of the mitzvah.*

### Yayin - Wine

5) Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Nazir 3b-4a

What does R. Simeon make of the statement, 'he shall abstain from wine and strong drink'? He requires it to prohibit wine the drinking of which is commanded as well as wine the drinking of which is optional. What is this [wine the drinking of which is commanded]? The wine of Kiddush and Havdalah. He is bound by the oath taken on Sinai!

6) Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Berachot 33a

At first the Rabbis placed Havdalah as a part of the Amidah in the evening service; when the people became richer, they arranged for it to be said over the cup of wine; when the people became poor again, they again fixed it in the prayers; and they said : He who pronounces the 'Separation' in the prayers must do it again over the cup of wine."

7) Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 296:2

You can make havdalah on beer if it is a *chamar medina* and this is the case for all other drinks except for water...*we are accustomed to make havdalah at the end of Pesach on beer and not wine as it is more precious to us.*

### Besamim - Spices

8) Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Beitzah 16a

As Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish said: The Holy One, Blessed be He, gives a person an additional soul on Shabbat eve, and at the conclusion of Shabbat removes it from him, as it is stated: "He ceased from work and was refreshed [*vayinafash*]" (Exodus 31:17). Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish expounds the verse as follows: Since he ceased from work, and now Shabbat has concluded and his additional soul is removed from him, woe [*vai*] for the additional soul [*nefesh*] that is lost.

9) Mishnah Berurah 297:2

"If you don't have spices, you don't have to go looking for some."-Because we only bless them to revive the spirit, which is pained at the exiting of Shabbat.

### Ner - Candle

10) Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 298:2

It is preferable to bless over a torch. And there is one opinion that if you don't have a torch then you have to light another candle for Havdalah aside from the candle that is being used to light up the home. *Rama: A candle that has two wicks is called a torch.*

11) Mishnah Berurah 298:9

"It is customary to look"-The reason is that one can distinguish the light between each finger. And similarly we look at the fingernails to see if one can distinguish the light between each finger, like one can distinguish between the nail and the flesh. And furthermore, because fingernails are a good omen because they grow forever. And we look at the palms of hands because the lines on the hand have an omen that can be blessed.

12) Bereishit Rabbah 11:2

"And Elokim blessed the seventh day and sanctified it"- He blessed it with light. Because the sun began to set on Friday night and the light began to shine, all began to praise. Rabbi Levi in the name of Rabbi Zeira said: 36 hours the the light shined - 12 on Sabbath eve, 12 on Shabbat night, and 12 on Shabbat day. When the sun then began to set at the end of the Sabbath and it began to get dark, Adam became afraid. What

did God do? He appointed for Adam two flints and he struck one against the other and light emanated from them. And Adam made a blessing on it. What did he say? "Borei M'orei Ha'aish" (who creates light sources for fire). Why do we say this blessing at the end of Shabbat? ... because this was the beginning of its creation.

### Women and Havdalah

13) Aruch HaShulchan, Orach Chaim 296:4-5

And the Maggid Mishneh writes that there are those who disagree (that havdalah is a Torah commandment) and that it is only rabbinic...The practical difference in this is whether women are obligated. If it is a Torah obligation then women are obligated because they are equal in all things shabbat. If it is rabbinic and it is not dependent on the mitzvah of keeping shabbat, rather it is a standalone mitzvah in its own right, and it is a time bound positive mitzvah then women are not obligated....And because of this the Rama wrote "Therefore a woman should not make havdalah herself, rather she should only hear it from a man."

...And this concerns where she is exempting men from their obligation (as perhaps his is a Torah obligation and hers is a Rabbinic one) and it is better that she hears it from a man, but it is obvious that if she has no one to make it for her she can make havdalah herself.

### Deadline?

14) Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Pesachim 106a

The sons of Rabbi Hiyya said: the one who does not make Havdalah at the close of Shabbat, until when can they make it? Until the fourth day of the week (Tuesday evening).

15) Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 299:6

One who forgot and did not make havdalah on Saturday night can make havdalah until the end of Tuesday. There are those who say that we do not make havdalah except for all day Sunday and no further. And specifically *Boreh Pri HaGafen*, and מבדיל בין קודש ללחול. However, over a candle and spices we do not make a blessing except on Saturday night.

### Eliyahu HaNavi

16) Mishnah Berurah 295:7

On Motzei Shabbat - because the Talmud (Eruvin 43) explains: Eliyahu Hanavi cannot come on either Erev Shabbat or Erev Yom Tov because of the hassle. (Rashi explains that everyone would go out to greet him and not have time to get ready for Shabbat). Therefore now that Shabbat is over and he is able to come, we pray that he should come soon and bring us good tidings.