



B'NAI DAVID-JUDEA

Shabbat Shorts

Usually things just end, but with Shabbat, a ritual is required.

Over the next few Shabbat Shorts, we will explore the halachot around havdalah. Havdalah marks (both for Shabbat and Yom Tov), the closing of sacred time and the movement into the regular flow of our weeks.

The Shulchan Aruch codifies that at the end of Shabbat, this should ideally include the havdalah insertion in our maariv tefillah, found in 'Atah Chonen', **as well as** havdalah said over a cup (Orach Chayim 294:1). After 'hamavdil bein kodesh lechol' is said, melacha may be done (Mishnah Berurah Orach Chayim 294:1:3).

Understanding these two 'havdalahs' can tell us much not only about how we end Shabbat, but also about how we perceive our weekdays.

The tefillah havdalah acknowledges that just as God gives us the ability to discern between night and day, He also gives us the capacity to differentiate between holy and profane. Havdalah marks human cognitive abilities as Divine gifts-- which is why it appears in the bracha that references our intellectual blessings. We cherish our sacred time on Shabbat, and we also recognize that the functions of chol, of the weekday, are essential to our livelihood and our service of God. To do melacha is also a gift.

Similarly, havdalah over a cup at the close of Shabbat contains familiar content, but it is also said over wine, besamim, and a candle (הבדלה, נר, בשמים, נר). Why the addition of physical objects? The

Shulchan Aruch notes that these pieces form the acronym, יבנ"ה. On Shabbat, we spend our day resting from work, recognizing that God is the Ultimate Creator and Builder of our lives. And then, when we transition out of Shabbat, we use יבנ"ה-- literally 'he will build'-- tools that in name identify that we too are builders in this world. During the week, we build God's world as partners with Him. And God willing, יבנ"ה also means that He will build us-- He will give us inspiration and goodness in our weeks, and also bless us to rebuild His physical home in this world.

And so each havdalah reveals inspiration for the week ahead. The havdalah of tefillah emphasizes the gift of the human mind in perceiving sacred and non-sacred time and in doing so encourages us to appreciate and use our minds well. And the physical ritual of havdalah over a cup highlights our calling to be God's building partners in this world-- to not only think, listen, and perceive, but also to do.

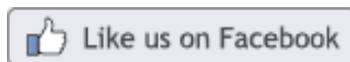
Now practically, what if a person forgets to say havdalah in maariv but remembers to say it over a cup? What are the rules?

Stay tuned for the next Shabbat Short when we explore the answers to these questions and more!

I love feedback!
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