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ON **BEREISHIS** - 5768

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"The Spiritual Human INNERNET MAGAZINE <http://innernet.org.il>
January 2007

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"THE SPIRITUAL HUMAN"

by **Rabbi Abraham J. Twerski, M.D.**

Man is the only living creature that can learn from the history of past generations -- to avoid mistakes they made and build upon their positive accomplishments. Man is the only living thing that can reflect on the purpose of life and contemplate an ultimate goal in life. Man is the only being that can seek to improve himself voluntarily by his own efforts. (Caterpillars do improve when they become butterflies, but this is an automatic process programmed in their genes, and they do not willfully decide to become butterflies.)

Man is the only being that can think about the future consequences of his actions. Man is the only being that can delay gratification, and man is the only living thing that can make ethical and moral decisions, in defiance of bodily drives and urges.

All animal behavior is self-centered. With the exception of domesticated pets that may adopt human traits, the nature of an animal is to satisfy all its desires. An animal will not sacrifice its comfort for the benefit of another animal (except for mothers animals, which have a biological feeling for their young). The ability to put another's needs ahead of one's own is uniquely human, and is one of the important distinctions between man and animals.

The desire to have all one's needs met is self-centeredness, hence it is an animal rather than a human trait. To put it bluntly, a marriage that is predicated on having one's own needs met is essentially an animal-type relationship. If the goal is primarily one's own gratification, it stands to reason that if either partner feels that another person could do a better job at providing that gratification, the terms of the contract are void.

But a person is not an animal. A person is a mensch (Yiddish for 'human'), who was created when G-d "blew a breath of life into him." As the Zohar says, the Torah uses this metaphor because when one exhales, he exhales something from within himself. Therefore, when G-d "blew a breath of life" into man, He put something of Himself into him. Man, therefore, has a Divine soul, and it should be beneath one's dignity to ignore the soul and behave solely based on the body's desire for gratification, which is animalistic behavior. A person must be a mensch, who is able to sacrifice his comfort and personal needs for the benefit of others.

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I once came across an article, "How Do Lobsters Grow?" Lobsters are soft animals that live inside a rigid shell. Inasmuch as the shell does not expand, how can a lobster increase its size?

The answer is that as the lobster grows, its shell becomes confining and oppressive. The lobster then retreats to an underwater rock formation where

it is protected from predatory fish, sheds its shell, and produces a larger and more spacious one. Eventually, this larger shell becomes uncomfortably confining, and the lobster repeats this process several times until it reaches its maximum size.

The point to note is that the stimulus that enables the lobster to grow is discomfort. If not for the discomfort, the lobster would never expand its shell!

Science and technology have eliminated so many sources of discomfort, that our predecessors experienced that many people think there should be no discomfort in life, and if someone is uncomfortable, there must be a pill to relieve it. We seem to have lost a tolerance for discomfort, not realizing that discomfort may be a signal to us that we should grow.

If criticism makes one feel uncomfortable (as it generally does), rather than feeling resentful, one should seize the opportunity to utilize it as a stimulus for growth.

People's reaction to what they see as criticism varies. A determining factor in the reaction is the quality of one's self-esteem. A person with low self-esteem is apt to see all criticism as an insult and an affront to his dignity, and may react defensively or with self-denigration.

* * *

Spirituality requires effort, much effort. We are born into the world essentially as animal bodies with all the drives characteristic of animals. As we mature, we are supposed to develop ourselves into the dignified human beings G-d intended us to be.

Consider the Baal Shem Tov's interpretation of the verse in Genesis (1:6), "And G-d said, 'Let us make man!'" The obvious question is: Whom was G-d addressing? Furthermore, G-d did not seek anyone's involvement in any other part of creation. Why was the creation of man unique in this way?

The Baal Shem Tov explained that both angels and animals are born essentially in a state of completion and do not have to transform. Our bodies have limitations, our souls do not. Souls can fuse; bodies remain distinct. To the degree that one gives emphasis to one's body, to that degree one gives emphasis to that component of our being that separates us. To the degree that one gives emphasis to the soul, to that degree one gives emphasis to that component of our being that binds us.

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From: ravfrand-owner@torah.org on behalf of **Rabbi Yissocher Frand**
[ravfrand@torah.org] Sent: Friday, October 28, 2005 1:09 AM To: ravfrand@torah.org Subject: Rabbi Frand on Parshas Bereshis

"RavFrand" List - Rabbi Frand on Parshas Bereshis -
These divrei Torah were adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Tapes on the weekly portion: Tape # 476, Melacha of Planting. They're here! Commuter Chavrusa Bereishis Series 18 are available, on tape or CD, to enlighten, inspire and perhaps amuse you with such fascinating topics as: "Tefillah - Guaranteeing Success", "May Women Always Attend Shul?", "Be Careful What You Ask For" For complete listings of all the new offerings, log onto our secure site at <http://www.yadychiel.org> and select the "Timely Offers" button, or send e-mail to tapes@yadychiel.org, or call us at 410-358-0416. And while you're there, don't forget that the entire Yad Yechiel Tape Library, featuring the complete collection of Rav Frand's cassette shiurim, is also now available for viewing online. At <http://www.yadychiel.org>, you can browse through a comprehensive listing of 17 years of weekly shiurim, view Parsha Perceptions, Halacha Tapes, Hashkafa Tapes and Theme Sets. Plus, you'll find order information on this easy-to-navigate site. Log on today, and enjoy the world of Torah Tapes from Yad Yechiel!

Rabbi Yissocher Frand
"Special Mitzvos" Earn Divine Favor

The pasuk [verse] at the end of the parsha says: "And Hashem [G-d] reconsidered having made Man on earth, and He was pained in His heart.

And Hashem said, 'I will dissolve Man whom I created, from upon the face of the earth - from man to animal, to creeping things, and to birds of the sky; for I have reconsidered My having made them.'" [Bereshis 6:6-7]

Man had descended to a level of corruption to the extent that G-d, as it were, 'regretted' having created him. This brought the Almighty to the decision that He must wipe out the world and start over - so to speak. Parshas Bereshis ends with the words "And Noach found favor in the Eyes of Hashem" [Bereshis 6:8].

The Or HaChaim notes that Hashem did not decide to save Noach as a result of his righteousness. It is true that Noach was a tzadik [righteous person], as we learn at the beginning of next week's parsha [Bereshis 6:9]. However, that fact alone would not have saved Noach, because the Almighty had full 'regret' on the entire institution of the creation of the world. When G-d decides to destroy, He destroys the wicked and the righteous alike. The salvation of Noach was an act of Divine Kindness that did not emanate from the realm of justice or "the merits of his case". Noach was saved as a manifestation of special "Divine favor," as the last pasuk in Parshas Bereshis testifies.

The Or HaChaim explains that certain mitzvos endear a person to the Almighty in a way that might qualify the doer for special "Divine favors." All the positive and negative commandments are important. But there are a few commands that have this special endearing quality, of allowing a person to find special favor in the Eyes of the Master of the Universe. In spite of the fact that the person may not be worthy, the Almighty grants the person that which he does not really deserve.

Sometimes our children do things for which they deserve to be punished, but they know how to "press the right buttons" with their parents, such that we tend to look the other way. The Or HaChaim says this same concept, *l'havdil*, comes into play in our relationship with the Ribono shel Olam.

Sometimes we see a person who is very successful and has been blessed with all type of Divine favor. We look at this person and wonder to ourselves: "He doesn't appear to be a particularly righteous person who we would expect to be deserving of all this Divine Beneficence." Sometimes a person merits such blessing because "he has found favor in the Eyes of the L-rd." Perhaps he performs these one or two mitzvos that have this magical power to inspire "free gifts" (*mantas chinam*) from the Almighty.

Of course, we would all like to know which mitzvos are those two or three mitzvos that have this magical power. The Or HaChaim states that although it is clear that there are three or four such mitzvos, the Ribono shel Olam has never revealed to us their identities - for obvious reasons! But whatever those mitzvos are, Noach intuitively was aware of them and Noach did something that ingratiated him to the Ribono shel Olam. Despite the fact that the Almighty was intent on wiping out the entire planet, Noach found favor in His eyes.

The Or HaChaim then points out an observation that I never stopped to ponder: The letters of the name Noach are exactly the letters (in reverse order) of the word *Chen* (favor). As we find many times, Noach's name alludes to the essence of his personality. He was a person who found Favor.

As in the time of Noach, today there are also two or three mitzvos that merit the performer with special Divine Favor. Since we don't know which mitzvos those are, the safest bet is to do all of them, thereby assuring ourselves we have included the "special mitzvos" in the list of commandments for which we are given credit.

Transcribed by David Twersky; Seattle, WA DavidATwersky@aol.com
Technical Assistance by Dovid Hoffman; Baltimore, MD
dhoffman@torah.org

This write-up was adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Torah Tape series on the weekly Torah portion. The complete list of halachic topics covered in this series for Parshas Bereishis are provided below: Tape # 026 - Adoption: Problems and Solutions Tape # 068 - Artificial Insemination Tape # 117 - Inducing Labor: A viable option? Tape # 164 - Weddings in Shuls: Is there a Problem? Tape # 210 - Is Marriage a Mitzvah? Tape # 254 - Truth Tellings and Shidduchim Tape # 300 - A Mamzer's Obligation in Mitzvos Tape # 344 - Marriage and the Birchas Airusin Tape # 388 - The "Kedushai Ketanah" Controversy Tape # 432 - Choices in Marriage Partners Tape # 476 - Melacha of Planting Tape # 520 - Kavod and Oneg Shabbos Tape # 564 - You and Your Wife - Ishto Kegufu Tape # 608 -

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Covenant & Conversation

Thoughts on the Weekly Parsha from Sir Jonathan Sacks

Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the British
Commonwealth

[From 2 years ago - currently 5766]

<http://www.chiefrabbi.org/tt-index.html>

Bereishith

It is the most famous, majestic and influential opening of any book in literature: "In the beginning, G-d created the heavens and the earth." What is surpassingly strange is the way Rashi - most beloved of all Jewish commentators - begins his commentary:

Rabbi Isaac said: The Torah should have begun with the verse (Ex. 12: 1): "This month shall be to you the first of the months", which was the first commandment given to Israel. Can we really take this at face value? Did Rabbi Isaac, or for that matter Rashi, seriously suggest that the Book of books might have begun in the middle - a third of the way into Exodus? That it might have passed by in silence the creation of the universe - which is, after all, one of the fundamentals of Jewish faith?

Could we understand the history of Israel without its prehistory, the stories of Abraham and Sarah and their children? Could we have understood those narratives without knowing what preceded them: G-d's repeated disappointment with Adam and Eve, Cain, the generation of the Flood and the builders of the Tower of Babel?

The fifty chapters of Genesis together with the opening of Exodus are the source - book of biblical faith. They are as near as we get to an exposition of the philosophy of Judaism. What then did Rabbi Isaac mean?

He meant something profound, which we often forget. To understand a book, we need to know to what genre it belongs. Is it history or legend, chronicle or myth? To what question is it an answer? A history book answers the question: what happened? A book of cosmology - be it science or myth - answers the question: how did it happen?

What Rabbi Isaac is telling us is that if we seek to understand the Torah, we must read it as Torah, which is to say: law, instruction, teaching, guidance. Torah is an answer to the question: how shall we live? That is why he raises the question as to why it does not begin with the first command given to Israel.

Torah is not a book of history, even though it includes history. It is not a book of science, even though the first chapter of Genesis - as the 19th-century sociologist Max Weber pointed out - is the necessary prelude to science, because it represents the first time people saw the universe as the product of a single creative will, and therefore as intelligible rather than capricious and mysterious. It is, first and last, a book about how to live. Everything it contains - not only commandments but also narratives, including the narrative of creation itself - is there solely for the sake of ethical and spiritual instruction.

How this relates to creation is a topic for another time. It is, however, an introduction to this year's Covenant and Conversation. Each week I will be looking at an ethical issue addressed by the parsha of the week. Sometimes

this is a matter of halakhah, but not always. Jewish ethics is not confined to law. It includes virtues of character, general principles and role models. It is conveyed not only by commandments but also by narratives, telling us how particular individuals responded to specific situations.

It moves from the minutest details to the most majestic visions of the universe and our place within it. But it never deviates from its intense focus on the questions: What shall I do? How shall I live? What kind of person should I strive to become? It begins, in Genesis 1, with the most fundamental question of all. As the Psalm (8: 4) puts it: "What is man that You are mindful of him?"

Pico della Mirandola's 15th century Oration on Man was one of the turning points of Western civilization, the "manifesto" of the Italian Renaissance. In it he attributed the following declaration to G-d, addressing the first man:

"We have given you, O Adam, no visage proper to yourself, nor endowment properly your own, in order that whatever place, whatever form, whatever gifts you may, with premeditation, select, these same you may have and possess through your own judgement and decision. The nature of all other creatures is defined and restricted within laws which We have laid down; you, by contrast, impeded by no such restrictions, may, by your own free will, to whose custody We have assigned you, trace for yourself the lineaments of your own nature. I have placed you at the very center of the world, so that from that vantage point you may with greater ease glance round about you on all that the world contains. We have made you a creature neither of heaven nor of earth, neither mortal nor immortal, in order that you may, as the free and proud shaper of your own being, fashion yourself in the form you may prefer. It will be in your power to descend to the lower, brutish forms of life; you will be able, through your own decision, to rise again to the superior orders whose life is divine." Homo sapiens, that unique synthesis of "dust of the earth" and breath of G-d, is unique among created beings in having no fixed essence: in being free to be what he or she chooses. Mirandola's Oration was a break with the two dominant traditions of the Middle Ages: the Christian doctrine that human beings are irretrievably corrupt, tainted by original sin, and the Platonic idea that humanity is bounded by fixed forms.

It is also a strikingly Jewish account - almost identical with the one given by Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik in *Halakhic Man*: "The most fundamental principle of all is that man must create himself. It is this idea that Judaism introduced into the world." It is therefore with a frisson of recognition that we discover that Mirandola had a Jewish teacher, Rabbi Elijah ben Moses Delmedigo (1460-1497).

Born in Crete, Delmedigo was a Talmudic prodigy, appointed at a young age to be head of the yeshivah in Padua. At the same time, he studied philosophy, in particular the work of Aristotle, Maimonides and Averroes. At the age of 23 he was appointed professor of philosophy at the University of Padua. It was through this that he came to know Count Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, who became both his student and his patron. Eventually, however, Delmedigo's philosophical writings - especially his work *Bechinat ha-Dat* - became controversial. He was accused, by other rabbis, of heresy. He had to leave Italy and return to Crete. He was much admired by Jews and Christians alike, and when he died young, many Christians as well as Jews attended his funeral.

This emphasis on choice, freedom and responsibility is one of the most distinctive features of Jewish thought. It is proclaimed in the first chapter of Genesis in the most subtle way. We are all familiar with its statement that G-d created man "in His image, after His likeness". Seldom do we pause to reflect on the paradox. If there is one thing emphasized time and again in the Torah, it is that G-d has no image. "I will be what I will be", He says to Moses when he asks Him His name.

Since G-d transcends nature - the fundamental point of Genesis 1 - then He is free, unbounded by nature's laws. By creating human beings in His image, He gave us a similar freedom, thus creating the one being capable itself of being creative. The unprecedented account of G-d in the Torah's

opening chapter leads to an equally unprecedented view of the human person and our capacity for self-transformation..

The Renaissance, one of the high points of European civilization, eventually collapsed. A series of corrupt rulers and Popes led to the Reformation, and to the quite different views of Luther and Calvin. It is fascinating to speculate what might have happened had it continued along the lines signalled by Mirandola. His late 15th century humanism was not secular but deeply religious.

As it is, the great truth of Genesis 1 remains. As the rabbis put it (Bereishith Rabbah 8: 1; Sanhedrin 38a): "Why was man created last? In order to say, if he is worthy, all creation was made for you; but if he is unworthy, he is told, even a gnat preceded you." The Torah remains G-d's supreme call to humankind to freedom and creativity on the one hand, and on the other, to responsibility and restraint - becoming G-d's partner in the work of creation.

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The Lineage of Man **By Moshe A. Shulman**

The Mishna in Sanhedrin 37 tells us: "Man was created alone to tell us that whoever kills one person is considered to have destroyed a whole world and whoever saves one person is considered to have saved a whole world and so that nobody can tell his friend that his father is greater than his friend's father ... therefore it is incumbent upon every person to say that 'the world was created for me.'"

The mishna gives other reasons as well, as does the gemara on 38a. One such reason given in the gemara stands out: So that the children of tzadikim will not say "we are " the children of tzadikim and that the children of resha'im will not say: "we are the children of resha'im. Rashi explains that these

the children of tzadikim are using their lineage as an excuse to not distance themselves from aveiros, as they think that they won't sin. The children of resha'im, on the other hand, would say that teshuva is beyond them and would give up right then.

However, there is a very fundamental and obvious question that one must ask on the gemara and the mishna. While it is true that nobody was able to brag about his lineage in the days of Adam HaRishon, now that the world population is 6 billion, the problem of two people arguing over who has a greater father exists. Also, children of tzadikim and children of resha'im can still fall into the potential pitfalls specified by the aforementioned Rashi.

The Maharsha says that what the gemara means is that if Adam would not have been created yehidi, then the bnei tzadikim would say that their genes are inherently different from those of normal people, as they are not related at all; they come from different created people. Likewise, bnei resha'im might say that their ancestry makes them worse than normal people, because their original ancestor was of a different nature than the original ancestor of bnei tzadikim or even beinonim. However, now that we know that everyone came from Adam there is no inherent difference between bnei reshaim and bnei tzadikim and everyone's deeds are controlled by his own bechira. The same reasoning can be applied to the case of Shalom Habriyos. In fact, the Maharsha points out, one can not even say that his tzidkus or rish'us was inherited from "the father's side" (i.e. Adam) or "the mother's side" (i.e. Chava) as Chava was made out of Adam. Thus, everyone has the ability to choose between good and bad.

A manifestation and extension of this idea can be found in the writings of Rav Soloveitchik. In Halakhic Man, he writes that a person, through the actions of the present, can change the interpretation of the past; the process of cause and effect is dynamic, constantly changing. This is what enables one to do Teshuva, as his actions of repentance affect how the past affects him. This is, I believe, the message of this gemara. The past is not dead, nor is one's destiny set in stone. Each person has the power to transcend his barriers and choose his path in life.

I would also like to suggest that this is the meaning of "Whoever kills one person is considered to have destroyed a whole world and whoever saves one person is considered to have saved a whole world."

When someone kills somebody else, he does not only kill him as he is now, but he has destroyed an entire world of opportunity, a dynamic world of change. It is within the power of a person to change his past and his perceived nature through his actions, and one who kills him cuts off a world of limitless opportunities. On the other hand, if one saves another human being he has just perpetuated the other person's ability to change.

We should take the message of this Mishna which is indeed the message of Briyas Ha'Adam and realize that it is always within our power to do what is good.

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"GRATITUDE ATTITUDE"

by Rabbi Zelig Plskin

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There is an attitude that is sometimes referred to as a "Center of the Universe Complex." This is when someone feels that everything centers around him. His mindset goes like this: "Of course, people do things for me. They should. Everyone should. And therefore I have no need to be grateful to anyone. Everyone who does things for me is doing exactly what they should be doing and I don't have to feel grateful."

On one level the basic idea that "the universe was created for me" is a correct concept. As the Talmud (Sanhedrin 37a) states, "A person is obligated to say, 'The world was created for me.'" But this is not meant to be a source of selfishness and self-centeredness. Just the opposite; this is a statement that we are responsible for the world. We need to think about what we can do to help the entire world. Of course, we are all limited in time, energy, and resources. But we should do as much as we can.

A self-centered person isn't grateful. He is more likely to have complaints that others aren't doing enough for him. As a matter of fact, there is never enough that others can do for him. If they would do things for him day and night, there would still be more that they could do. And a self-centered person won't be a truly happy person. He is a taker and not a giver.

Givers' attitudes can foster in them a sense of gratitude for what they receive. They are grateful for opportunities to do kindness for others. This will provide them with many opportunities for doing positive, meaningful things that give them joy.

* * *

Someone told me that he almost got divorced, but at the last minute his marriage was saved. He related, "As a child I didn't do anything for anyone. I was an only child and my parents couldn't do enough for me. They never let me do things and spoiled me rotten. I got anything I wanted. I had no tasks or duties to do in my house. My mother or father would do it all. I grew up with the attitude that everything was coming to me and there was no need to be grateful to anyone for what they did for me. When I met my future wife, she seemed like a very kind person. And I thought to myself, 'She will be like my mother. I won't have to do anything for her and she will do everything for me.'

"I was taken by surprise when after a year of marriage she told me she was totally miserable. She worked hard and I never uttered a word of gratitude. I

didn't help out in the house no matter how tired she was. If I was lazy but appreciative, it would be bearable. But all she got were complaints that she didn't do enough, and what she did, she didn't do fast enough. She asked me to go for counseling but I refused. I viewed her complaints as immature. That is what she was there for: to serve me. She should be so happy that she was married that she shouldn't have any complaints.

"When the rabbis at the Rabbinical Court heard the entire story, they told me, 'Your wife does so much for you, how can you not be grateful?' That's her job and obligation, I defended myself. But they told me that I needed to develop at least a minimal level of gratitude. If not, I wouldn't be able to make a future marriage work either.

"See if you can become more grateful,' they said to me. 'Let's meet again in a month.' That night I couldn't sleep. I realized that they were right. My wife did do a tremendous amount of things for me. I should have been grateful. I apologized to her from the bottom of my heart, and told her that I resolved to be grateful. And I would do more things for her. She was skeptical and said, 'Seeing is believing. Words are cheap. Unless I see a change, the marriage is over.' That hurt. But it was understandable.

"By the end of the month, she saw in action how I was deeply grateful to her for the many things that she did for me. I helped her in ways that I wouldn't have believed I would ever do. What's more, I felt so much better about myself for improving my character.

"That was more than a year ago," he said. "And I have a happy marriage. My wife is happy with me and I am happy with her. I see how close I was to ruining my life. I am grateful that the wake-up call I received actually woke me up."

* * *

When someone does something imperfectly for you, you will have to make a choice. One choice is to focus mainly on what wasn't done right, and could -- even should -- have been done better. The other choice is to focus mainly on what was done right, and to be sensitive about the wording of the correction.

When we have a gratitude consciousness, we will focus mainly on what the other person did that was helpful to us. We will have "a good eye." We will see what was done. We will see what was done right. We will see the other person's efforts. We will comment on how we sincerely appreciated what the other person did -- and did right.

Don't we have to point out what wasn't done right and what needs to be done better? Very often, yes. And we need to do it in such a way that our expressions of appreciation come first and stronger...

Start off with words of gratitude. Let it be stated clearly that you are grateful. Then you can gently and sensitively point out what needs to be done better, either this time or in the future. When you point out the mistake or what wasn't done yet, don't use the word "but."

For example: "Thank you for what you did, but you did this thing wrong, and that thing wrong, and those things wrong." Rather, use the word "and." "Thank you so very much for what you did, and allow me to point out this detail that needs to be corrected."

What will be stronger in your mind, gratitude for the positive, or irritation for the negative? Regardless of what it used to be, now, in the present, appreciate your own opportunities to feel grateful and to express it. Allow your feelings of gratitude to increase and let them create the good will that they have the power to generate.

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### **Parsha Page**

**by Fred Toczek –**

A Service of Anshe Emes Synagogue (Los Angeles)

Bereishis

D. Love Thy Neighbor (Rabbi Zelig Pliskin)

In all encounters with other people, remember that you are dealing with a being who was created in Hashem's image. "And G-d created man in His own image; in the image of G-d He created him." Rabbi Akiba said "The verse, Love your fellow man as yourself is a great principle of the Torah." Ben Azai said "The verse, When G-d created man He created Him in His image' is an even greater principle." Love of one's fellow man which isn't motivated and nourished by the realization that man was created in G-d's image is doomed to failure. When we realize that our fellow man was fashioned in Hashem's image, he/she is suddenly transformed into a being that is without parallel.

E. In the Garden of the Torah (the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, z'tl).

1. Finding the Light for Ourselves. When the Torah describes creation, its first words are not "Let there be light,"; instead, it speaks of "void and darkness". Why? Chazal (our Sages) explain that G-d's motive in creating the universe was "a desire for a dwelling [for Him] in the lower realms." A dwelling means a home, a place where one's essence is manifest; the "lower realms" refer to our material universe, in which G-dliness can't ordinarily be perceived. Had Hashem begun with light -- were he to have created a world that recognizes Him effortlessly -- all existence would have been one with Him and there would have been no "lower realms". G-d, however, wants man to exist in a universe which by its very nature seems to separate him from his Creator, thereby allowing us the opportunity to realize the connection for ourselves.

2. Two Beginnings. To help ensure that the "lower realms" would be capable of transformation into a "dwelling" for Hashem, Hashem embedded two distinct elements within creation from the outset. As Rashi comments, the word "Bereishis" can be read "b' reishis" ("two entities which are called beginning"); as Chazal commented: Creation is for the sake of Torah (the beginning of the path) and the Jewish People (the beginning of Hashem's crop). Since the Torah and Jewish people are one with Hashem, the observance of mitzvos expresses the purpose of creation ("a mitzvah is a candle, and the Torah light").

3. Partners In Creation. The simple meaning of the words "[i]n the beginning" indicates that creation is only the first phase in an ongoing process. This highlights the importance of man's contribution -- man is intended to be G-d's "partner in creation", helping G-d realize His desire for a dwelling in the "lower realms". G-d created the material world, but left to man the task of revealing the spiritual within it. The Tzemach Tzedek, z'tl (the third Lubavitcher Rebbe) said: "according to the stance one adopts on Shabbos Bereishis, the entire year follows." For every year is a renewal of the cycle of creation. The Zohar teaches that "G-d looked into the Torah and created the world; man looks into the Torah and maintains the world."

F. Kol Dodi on the Torah (Rabbi David Feinstein)

1. "In The Beginning". "In the beginning of G-d's creating the heavens and the earth." According to Rashi, the word "bereishis" is grammatically a construct noun, i.e., in the beginning OF something. In the beginning of what? The unstated subject of this verse is the Torah itself, which existed from the outset. Thus, we can read this verse as "in the beginning of Torah, Hashem created the heavens and the earth". What does this mean? Chazal teach that before Hashem created the world, He first made the Torah, which He then used as a blueprint and guideline for designing the world. In other words, He created a world to fit the Torah, to provide situations in which the Torah can function. The converse is also true -- that is, just as the

Torah is the justification for the world, it has no meaning unless it is practiced; this is why the Torah was given to human beings.

2. "G-d blessed the Seventh Day". Rashi comments that this verse refers to the double portion of manna which fell on the day before Shabbos. Since we no longer have manna, how does this blessing apply to us today? Later in this Parsha, man was given the curse of hard work ("by the sweat of your brow shall you get bread to eat"); however, this curse doesn't apply to Shabbos. Chazal teach that all of a man's provisions are rationed for him, except for his expenses of Shabbos. For one day a week, Hashem provides for all of our needs, absolutely free of charge, as if we were guests at His table. Thus, the work we do in six days gives us only six days of livelihood; what we need for Shabbos comes directly from heaven, in fulfillment of the blessing Hashem gave to the seventh day.

G. V'Shee-Non-Tom (Rabbi Elias Schwartz)

The importance of Derech Eretz. Hashem said "Let us make a man . . .". We all know that there is only one G-d; why, then, is this written in the plural? Rashi notes that while G-d obviously didn't need any help creating man, He discussed this with the angels in heaven, in order to teach us derech erez, respect for the opinion of others and the value of humility (i.e., no one should feel that they are so great that they need not discuss their problems with others). As Rabbi Elchonon Wasserman, z'tl taught, for here "we see how important it is for the Jew to be an individual of good character, to be humble and friendly."

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### **Shnayim Mikra V'echad Targum**

**by Rabbi Howard Jachter**

Introduction The Gemara (Berachot 8a) teaches, "one should always finish the Parshiot with the community [by studying] Shnayim Mikra V'echad Targum (the Parsha twice and Targum Onkelos once)." The Aruch Hashulchan (O.C. 285:2) notes that this is a rabbinical obligation. It seems that women are not obligated to study Shemot (the common acronym for Shnayim Mikra V'echad Targum), since it is a time bound positive obligation. In this issue, we will examine the parameters of this obligation.

Reason for the Obligation In the introduction to the Sefer Hachinuch, the author explains a reason for this obligation in a simple yet beautiful way:

Our sages established that we should read a portion of the Torah every week in the synagogue to inspire us to observe the Torah...The sages also obligated us to study in our home every week the Torah portion that is read in the synagogue to further enhance our understanding of the Torah.

The aforementioned Gemara notes that all those who engage in Shemot "have their days and years lengthened." One may interpret the Gemara as saying that this practice greatly enhances the quality of one's life. Surely, the joy on Simchat Torah of one who has fulfilled his Shemot obligation is exponentially greater than one who has not done so. Moreover, the Shabbat of those who observe this Halacha is immensely enhanced. Indeed, the Tur and Shulchan Aruch present this Halacha in the context of Hilchot Shabbat. Rav Soloveitchik told this author that the primary time for Shemot is Shabbat. This author also heard from Rav Soloveitchik (in a public lecture delivered at Yeshiva University) that every Shabbat is characterized by the Parsha of the week. For instance, the Shabbat on which we read Parshat Ki Teitzei is not simply Shabbat; it is Shabbat Parshat Ki Teitzei. One may argue that while the public reading of the Torah characterizes Shabbat as, for instance, Shabbat Parshat Ki Teitzei, on the communal level, individual Shemot study characterizes the Shabbat as Shabbat Parshat Ki Teitzei for the individual.

Of course, the primary way that Shemot enhances one's life is by promoting fluency in our most basic and holy text, the Torah. The Jew who is not fluent in the Torah certainly does not enjoy a good Jewish quality of

life. Accordingly, even women, who are not technically obligated to study Shemot, receive abundant reward for doing so.

**A Defense for Those Who Do Not Study Shemot** Many individuals do not engage in Shemot for a variety of reasons. There is a "Limud Zechut" (limited Halachic basis) for these people. The Bait Yosef (Orach Chaim 285 s.v. Aval Misham) cites the opinion of the Raavan that Shemot is an obligation only for an individual who has not heard Kriat Hatorah in shul. According to the Raavan, Shemot is merely a substitute for Kriat Hatorah.

However, the Bait Yosef points out that almost all Rishonim reject the view of the Raavan. For example, he cites the Rambam (Hilchot Tefila 13:25) who writes that "although one hears the communal reading of the Torah he must study the Parsha every week Shnayim Mikra V'echad Targum." In fact, the Vilna Gaon (Biur Hagra O.C. 285:1) specifically notes that the Shulchan Aruch rejects the opinion of the Raavan.

Accordingly, those who do not study Shemot are not "sinners." However, it is proper to study Shemot in addition to hearing Kriat Hatorah in shul. All authorities concur, though, that one must study Shemot if he did not hear the communal Torah reading.

**When Must We Complete Shemot Study?** The Gemara does not specifically state that one must complete Shemot by a specific time. Tosafot (s.v. Yashlim), however, states that it is preferable to complete Shemot before eating on Shabbat. In fact, the Magen Avraham (285:2) cites the Shelah Hakadosh who writes that it is preferable to complete Shemot on Friday after Chatzot (midday). This preference stems from Kabbalistic concerns (Kabbalists attach profound significance to Shemot study - see Baer Heiteiv and Shaarei Teshuva 285:1). Tosafot notes, though, that it is acceptable to complete Shemot study even after the meal. However, Tosafot believes that Shemot must be completed before Shabbat ends. Indeed, the primary opinion presented by the Shulchan Aruch states that one must complete Shemot before Shabbat ends.

Nevertheless, the Shulchan Aruch cites two lenient opinions that appear in the Rishonim. One lenient view allows one to finish Shemot until the Wednesday after Shabbat in which we read the particular Parsha. This view is based on the Gemara (Pesachim 106a) that permits one to recite Havdala until Wednesday if he forgot to do so on Motzei Shabbat. A second, even more lenient view allows one until Simchat Torah to finish Shemot. The Aruch Hashulchan (285:10) writes that this is a viable opinion. The Mishna Berura (285:12) cautions that all authorities concur that it is preferable to complete Shemot before Shabbat ends.

**When May We Begin Study of Shemot?** Tosafot writes that the earliest time to begin Shemot study of a particular Parsha is after the Mincha on Shabbat afternoon when we begin to read from that Parsha. This opinion is codified by the Shulchan Aruch (O.C. 285:3, and see Mishna Berura 285:7).

One may suggest that this opinion of Tosafot reflects their view that Shemot is a weekly obligation (i.e. that we must study Shemot of a particular Parsha within the week in which we publicly read that particular Parsha). However, the lenient opinion that believes that one may complete Shemot until Simchat Torah regards Shemot as a yearly obligation (i.e. that every year one must complete Shemot). It would appear that just as the lenient view permits completing Shemot late, it also permits starting Shemot as early as Parshat Bereishit. Thus, if one finds difficulty in completing Shemot during the course of the year but is able to do so during a vacation period, he should take the opportunity and complete Shemot for the entire year during the vacation period. Rav Efraim Greenblatt and Rav Mordechai Willig told this author that they agree with this analysis.

Rashi or Targum Onkelos The Rosh (Berachot 1:8) and the Tur (O.C. 285) assert that Rashi's commentary to Chumash constitutes an alternative for Targum Onkelos for the study of Shemot. The Bait Yosef (O.C. 285 s.v. V'im Lamad), however, cites the Ri (Rashi's great grandson) as disputing this assertion. He thus rules that a "God fearing individual" should study both Targum Onkelos and Rashi. Similarly, in the Shulchan Aruch

(O.C. 285:3), Rav Karo rules that Rashi serves as a viable alternative to Onkelos, but a "God fearing person" should study both Rashi and Onkelos.

It seems from the Shulchan Aruch that if one had enough time to study either Onkelos or Rashi that one could choose either and that there is no preference between the two. The Mishna Berura and the Aruch Hashulchan also do not seem to indicate a preference between Onkelos and Rashi. It would thus appear that one with limited time is permitted to study either Onkelos or Rashi, according to his own preference. See, however, the Shaarei Teshuva (285:2) who presents a dispute among the Acharonim whether Onkelos or Rashi is preferable for one with limited time.

**Alternative Translations** Tosafot (s.v. Shnayim) cites an opinion that asserts that any translation of the Chumash into the local vernacular constitutes a viable alternative to Onkelos. Tosafot then rejects this opinion stating that Onkelos is special because Onkelos not only translates the Chumash but also explains many obscure words and passages. Both the Mishna Berura (285:5) and the Aruch Hashulchan (285:12) cite Tosafot's view as normative. However, the Mishna Berura writes that if one cannot comprehend Rashi he may use a Yiddish (or any other language) translation based on Rashi and traditional sources that are rooted in the Talmudic tradition.

**Conclusion** The study of Shemot is within the grasp of virtually anyone. If one cannot fulfill this obligation at the optimal level, he should nevertheless make every effort to fulfill this Mitzva as best he can. It might be a good idea to carry a small Chumash in one's attache case or car so that one can seize available moments to study Shemot.

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<http://www.aecomshul.org/havdalah.htm>

#### **Havdalah Havdalah**

**By: Dan Rubin**

Havdalah #1: The reason why I wrote the subject as "when one is able to end shabbos" and not "when shabbos ends" is because, according to the Pri Megadim, so long as one does not do melacha (although one would first have to say a type of havdalah before one could do melacha as will be discussed) then it is still considered as if it is shabbos for them and I do know a Rabbi in Cleveland who keeps shabbos until eleven o'clock at night all year round! So keeping that in mind, according to the Bais Yosef Orach Chaim 293:2 one may end shabbos and yom tov when one is able to see three small stars that are close to one another and not scattered about. There are other opinions, the Gra, that say that it is preferable to be strict and wait longer, until one cannot see anymore red in the sky where the sun has set.(MB: 293:4) And of course there are those that are even stricter, mainly Rabbenu Tam who doesn't consider it night until 72 minutes after sunset, which is the time it takes a person to walk "4 mil" (MB: 261:20). The times listed on the calendars for Einstein are for 46 minutes after sunset and unfortunately I'm not sure which of the first two opinions this corresponds to. Back to the Top

Havdalah #2: There is a positive commandment to sanctify and separate shabbos from the other days of the week with words at the termination of shabbos, just as there is a mitzvah to sanctify shabbos with kiddush when it begins. We learn the mitzvos of havdalah and kiddush from the same posuk in Shemos(20:8) "Remember the sabbath to sanctify it." and we learn out that we should sanctify it when shabbos enters and when it ends. However, there is a disagreement among the Poskim as to whether havdalah is actually a mitzvah d'oraisa or d'rabanan(MB: 296:1)

The bare minimum to make Havdalah can be done by saying "atah chonantanu" in the Shmoneh Esrei on motzi shabbos or on a motzi shabbos that falls out on a yom tov with "Vetodayanu," and this is even according to those opinions that hold that Havdalah is a mitvah d'oraisa. One can even make Havdalah through praise to Hashem that declares the differentiation of shabbos to the weekday, like "Baruch hamavdil ban kodesh l'chol" on a motzi shabbos or "Baruch hamavdil ban kodesh l'kodesh." on a motzi shabbos that falls out on yom tov. However, the Chachamim instituted that one must make Havdalah over a cup of wine even though they said Havdalah during tefillah(Rambam: Shabbos 29 halacha 6). Needless to say that one should be meticulous in trying to fulfill the mitvah of Havdalah like all other mitvos, however, if it is impossible to make Havdalah over a cup of wine(and these situations will be discussed in detail later) then one can fulfill ones obligation of Havdalah through tefillah. Back to the Top

Havdalah #3: If one said havdalah over a cup of wine before they davened ma'ariv, they should still say atah chonantanu in the shmoneh esrei of ma'ariv.(MB: 294:1) If they said Baruch ha'mavdil ban kodesh l'chol (or l'kodesh on a yom tov that falls out on motzi

shabbos) then they also need to say atah chonantanu during davening and make havdalah over a cup of wine.

If during davening someone forgot to say atah chonantanu and they already mentioned Hashem's name in the bracha of "chonane ha'daas" (or on a yom tov on motzi shabbos: atah bachartanu) then they should not go back to the beginning of the bracha in order to insert ata chonantanu but should rather finish the bracha and continue davening because one will say havdalah later over a cup of wine.(MB: 294:6)\*\*

\*\*Remember that if you forget to say atah chonantanu in davening you still cannot do any melacha before saying havdalah over a cup of wine. So for example one would even be unable to light the candle for havdalah, therefore, after davening one should say Baruch hamavdil ban kodesh l'chol in order to allow oneself to do melacha. Back to the Top Havdalah #4: Women's obligation for havdalah

There is a difference of opinion amongst the poskim (no surprise) in regards to a woman's obligation to hear havdalah. The poskim that say that women are obligated in havdalah, whether it be d'oraisa or d'rabanon, argue that even though havdalah is a mitzvah sheha'zman grama (time dependent mitzvah), men and women are still equally obligated in keeping the mitzvah's of shabbos, even those that are time dependent like kiddush, and since havdalah is considered by them to be included in the mitzvah of "zachor" of shabbos, women are thus obligated in havdalah. The poskim that say that women are not obligated in the mitzvah or havdalah argue that since havdalah does not take place on shabbos then women are obviously exempt from this mitzvah like other mitzvos sheha'zman gramah.(MB: 296:34)

Therefore, due to the disagreement among the poskim as to whether a woman is or is not obligated in havdalah, l'hatchila a woman should not make havdalah for herself rather she should fulfill her obligation by hearing havdalah said over a cup of wine from a man. This being said, a woman still needs to insert atah chonantanu if she is davening ma'ariv or if she does not daven and would like to do melacha before hearing havdalah over a cup of wine then she should say Baruch hamavdil ban kodesh l'chol. Back to the Top Havdalah #5: What to do if there are no men around?

If a woman is unable to fulfill her obligation of havdalah by hearing it from a man then she should say havdalah for herself over a cup of wine in order not to nullify the mitzvah of havdalah, however, she should not say the bracha over the candle when she makes havdalah.(MB: 296:35) The reason why a woman should not make the bracha over the candle is because when a woman makes havdalah we are relying on the opinion that says that havdalah is really attached to shabbos and that's why women are obligated in this mitzvah even though it is time dependent. Since the candle does not have any attachment to shabbos because it is definitely a melacha, and in addition it's also not a bracha hanah (for pleasure, otherwise one would have to make a bracha every time they got benefit from fire). So because the candle has no attachment to shabbos itself and it's not a bracha for pleasure, a woman should not make a bracha over it because she is not obligated in it.(MB: 296: Baer Halacha D"H Lo Yavdil)

There is a disagreement amongst the poskim as to whether a man that has already made havdalah for himself or has fulfilled his obligation by hearing havdalah from someone else or in a shul is able to make havdalah for a woman. Therefore, if there isn't a man who hasn't already fulfilled his obligation for havdalah, then it's better that the woman say for herself rather than have the man who has already fulfilled his obligation say for her. The reason why is because of the disagreement as to whether a woman is really obligated in havdalah or not. Since there is the possibility that a woman is not obligated then the man would be making a bracha in vain by saying havdalah for her and because of this concern it's better for the woman to make for herself.(MB: 296:36) Back to the Top Havdalah #6: More about women and Havdalah and also kids

A husband should not have intention to fulfill his obligation of havdalah in shul by hearing, for example, our very own Elly Gamss making havdalah in Lubin motzi shabbos. The reason for this is so he is able to make havdalah for his wife and children if he has them (and if he doesn't, then IY"H, soon by him). A woman who is making havdalah for herself is also able to make for other women since they share the same obligation. If the one making havdalah already said havdalah through tefillah or through saying Baruch Hamavdil ban kodesh l'chol, then the one who is listening should make sure to also say this in order that they both only have a d'rabanon obligation for havdalah. However, unlike kiddush a woman is not able to make havdalah for a man, but, Rav S. Auerbach zt'l said that if a woman's husband is sick (I think implying that it would be difficult for him to make havdalah, and there are no other men around who have not already fulfilled their obligation of making havdalah over wine) one can rely on the opinion of Rebbe Akiva Eiger zt'l who says that a woman's obligation of havdalah is d'oraisa. It's preferable if the husband would say, "Baruch Ha'mavdil ban kodesh l'chol" first, in order to make his obligation of havdalah only d'rabanon.

Parents are obligated to accustom their children who are old enough to know of the concept of shabbos in hearing havdalah just like they are obligated to do so in

regards to kiddush,(MB: 343:3) and children are also able to make havdalah for themselves. According to the opinions that says that women are obligated in havdalah then one should also accustom girls in hearing havdalah. A man who has already fulfilled his obligation of making havdalah over wine can say havdalah for a child (sons only though) who are old enough to have some idea of what the blessings mean (5 or 6 yrs old) and does not know how to make havdalah for himself.(MB: 273:16)

In places where the time for motzi shabbos and motzi yom tov are very late and the kids are not awake to hear havdalah after shabbos, one should have one of them make havdalah for the rest of them the morning after but they do not make the blessings over the spices or candle.(I'm not sure if one is able to make havdalah for a child who does not know how to make for himself in this situation because this is not mentioned. Needless to say I would ask your LOR (a.k.a Rabbi Blass)). Back to the Top Havdalah #7: Someone who didn't say havdalah:

If someone did not say havdalah motzi shabbos, whether they did so accidentally or intentionally, should say havdalah immediately when he remembers whether it's during the day or night (but one should wait until after one davens shacharis if he remembers during the morning)(MB: 299:16). One is able to say havdalah for shabbos until sunset of the third day of the week (before sundown on tuesday). The reason for this is because the first three days of the week are considered connected to the previous shabbos while the last three days of the week are connected to the shabbos coming up. When reciting havdalah (for shabbos) at a time other than motzi shabbos one should only make the bracha over the wine and Ha'mavdil ban kodesh l'chol and should not use a candle and spices. If someone did not say havdalah on motzi yom tov or motzi yom kippur then they are able to say havdalah during the entire following day until sunset but not afterwards. One does not say the bracha over the candle if they are saying havdalah for yom kippur at a time other than motzi yom kippur. If one forgot to say havdalah motzi Rosh Hashanah then one must make havdalah on Tzom Gedaliah. However, one obviously cannot drink the wine himself but should have a child who has reached the age of chinuch (around 5 or 6) drink it.

One is not allowed to eat anything after he remembers that he has not yet said havdalah and he currently is able to make havdalah (over a cup of wine).(This will be discussed in more detail later). Back to the Top Havdalah #8: Doing melacha, eating and drinking before havdalah

From the time when one is allowed to end shabbos it is forbidden d'rabanon for a person to do any melacha before one says some version of havdalah, either through tefillah, on a cup of wine or at the very least saying Baruch Ha'mavdil ban kodesh l'chol ("l'kodesh" on motzi shabbos yom tov). Even doing a melacha that is forbidden because of a rabbinic prohibition, or moving a muktzah item or even taking care of things that are needed for the week that aren't even a melacha are still forbidden until a person says one of the versions of havdalah and any melacha that a person does before saying a version of havdalah will not see any sign of bracha coming from that melacha(Pesachim 50:B)

Since women generally do not daven ma'ariv motzi shabbos or yom tov they should be especially careful to say Baruch Ha'mavdil ban kodesh l'chol before doing any type of melacha.

Someone who forgot to say havdalah during davening and has not said havdalah over a cup of wine or Baruch Ha'mavdil and mistakenly does a melacha, does not need to go back and daven the shmoneh esrei again. (Ba'er Halacha 294: D'H: V'im Taam) Back to the Top Havdalah #9: Havdalah and non-Shomer Shabbos Jews

It is permissible for someone to derive benefit from a melacha after tzais ha'kocavim that was done by someone who is not a shomer shabbos jew and has not made havdalah. Therefore, one may give such a person work to do motzi shabbos even though they know that that person will not say havdalah. This is more applicable to Eretz Yisrael but you may run into situations here, it is permissible to travel in a bus (or cab) on motzi shabbos even if you know that the driver is a non observant jew and has not made havdalah. There are those people who are strict to say "Shavua Tov" to the driver when they enter the bus or cab in order that the driver should answer back to them "Shavua Tov" so that the driver can fulfill his obligation of havdalah min ha'torah.

One should not get onto a bus or cab that is driven by a non-observant jew that left its station or was on the road before Tzais Ha'kocavim on shabbos, in order to pick up travelers immediately after shabbos, however, in a time of need one is allowed to use such a bus or cab. Back to the Top Havdalah #10: Eating and drinking before Havdalah

It is forbidden to eat or drink anything, except for water, from sunset on shabbos until one has made havdalah over a cup of wine, even if a person has already said havdalah in davening. Someone who did not say havdalah over a cup of wine motzi shabbos or yom tov must say havdalah immediately when they remember as was mentioned before and cannot eat until they have said havdalah over wine. However, a child, even a child who has reached the age of chinuch, is permitted to eat before hearing havdalah.

If one started a seuda (this is only referring to a seuda with bread), before sunset then they are able to continue their seuda past sunset and even after the time that one is allowed to end shabbos has passed (tzais ha'kocavim). Even if the main part of the seuda is over and a person would like to continue drinking or eat any other type of food other than bread they may continue to do so even after tzais ha'kocavim so long as they have not said Bircas Ha'mazon. Even if a person eating such a seuda said Baruch Ha'mavdil in order to permit them to do melacha, it is still permissible for them to continue with their seuda (there is a doubt though as to whether that person should say Retzai during bentsching and so one should ask their L.O.R what to do in such a case). However, if a person davens ma'ariv during their seuda then according to the Magen Avraham they are then obligated to say havdalah and they therefore cannot eat any more until they have fulfilled their obligation to say havdalah over a cup of wine. (MB: 299:4) Back to the Top Havdalah #11: Eating and drinking other than a fixed meal and bentsching over a cup of wine:

Someone who sits down to have drink before sunset, even if a number of people join him and drink with him, must stop drinking once the sun sets and cannot drink anything else until one hears havdalah (except for water). (MB: 299:5) The same law applies to eating fruit, candy, or even cake and cookies. As long as a person did not wash and make motzi then they cannot continue any eating, even if it began before sunset, past sunset until they hear havdalah over a cup of wine.\*\*\*

If one finishes their seuda and the sun has already set but its still not tzais ha'kocavim, then, if they chose to bentsch over a cup of wine then it is permissible for the one who bentsched over the cup of wine to drink a revi's (or more) of wine and say the al'hagefen blessing afterwards including the addition for shabbos, and even those people who said the bentsching with him are able to drink from the cup of wine. However, if one bentschs after tzais ha'kocavim then it is forbidden, even for the person who bentsched over the cup of wine, to drink from the wine before hearing havdalah unless the person is strict to always bentsch over a cup of wine. If a person always bentschs over a cup of wine then it is permissible for him to drink a revi's (or more) of the wine and say the al'hagefen bracha afterwards with the shabbos addition and if the people who bentsched with him are also strict to bentsch over a cup of wine then they can also drink from the wine. (Someone who always bentschs over a cup of wine on shabbos even though he doesn't during the rest of the week is considered to be strict in this manner).

For those people who are not strict in bentsching over a cup of wine but would still like to do so after tzais ha'kocavim, then they should bentsch over the cup of wine but not say the ha'gafen bracha and not drink from the wine after bentsching. Instead they should daven ma'ariv and then immediately afterwards make havdalah over the cup that was used for bentsching and be sure to drink a revi's of wine in order to say the al'hagefen bracha afterwards.

\*\*\* I'm not sure but I think there are some heterim that give a person a little more time after sunset to begin a seuda for shalosh seudas. I will try to find the sources for this but until then it seems that one should be strict not to begin any eating after sunset and must stop any eating other than a fixed meal with bread. Back to the Top Havdalah #12: Shalosh Seudas and Sheva Brachos:

Someone who makes a sheva brachos for a choson and kallah during shalosh seudas\*\* and finishes the meal at sunset or even after sunset can bentsch as one would normally do at a sheva brachos, over two cups of wine, one for bircas ha'mazon and one for the sheva brachos, so long as they have not reached tzais ha'kocavim. If they finished the seuda after tzais ha'kocavim, some people have the custom to nevertheless bentsch as one is accustomed to do, over the two cups of wine, make a ha'gafen bracha and then drink from the wine. However, there is another custom that one bentschs as they are accustomed to do and says the sheva brachos but they do not say the ha'gafen bracha (on either cup) and therefore do not taste from the wine. Rather they leave the cups of wine until after davening ma'ariv and then make havdalah over the cup that was used for bentsching, the one who makes havdalah should drink from the wine and then as usual, mix the two cups together and then pour back into each individual cup from the mixed wine and then give it for the choson and kallah and anyone else to drink.

However, if Shabbos is the last day of this couples sheva brachos, meaning that they were married on the previous sunday before sunset, then they should be careful to finish the seuda before sunset in order to bentsch and say the sheva brachos. However, if they did not finish the seuda until after sunset, or they finished the seuda before sunset but they did not say sheva brachos before sunset, then they should not say sheva brachos when they bentsch.

\*\* It is customary to not say "De'vy haseir" before bentsching but to insert "Nodeh le-shimcha" in its place on shabbos (This is in the zimun for a sheva brachos). Back to the Top Havdalah #13: Shalosh Seudas during the nine days:

If someone prolongs their shalosh seudas meal past the time where the community in which one lives in has already davened ma'ariv and brought out shabbos, then the Magen Avraham holds that one is not allowed to continue to eat meat or wine during that seuda since the individual is "dragged" along with his community and thus must accept upon themselves the restrictions of the nine days even though that individual

has yet to daven ma'ariv. However, there are those opinions, mainly the Elia Raba and Derech Chaim, who say that it is still permissible for an individual to continue to eat meat and wine during his shalosh seudas because for him it is still considered shabbos because he will include Rtzei in his bentsching and he has not yet said ma'ariv or havdalah. (MB: 551:56)

Someone who is considered to be strict to always bentsch over a cup of wine is permitted to do so even for shalosh seudas during the nine days when they will be bentsching after tzais ha'kocavim. Back to the Top Havdalah #14: Mistakenly eating before havdalah:

If someone made a mistake and began to eat after the time where one is forbidden to begin eating (after sunset) and before they brought out shabbos, then they should stop eating immediately when it becomes known to them that they began eating after the permitted time. If a person made a bracha over the food and then realized that it is forbidden to eat during that time and they have not yet tasted the food that they made the bracha over, then they should taste a little bit of the food in order that they should not have made a bracha l'vatalah (bracha in vain) and then should not continue to eat. If someone washed and made the bracha "al netilas yadayim" and before saying ha'motzi they realized that they were not permitted to begin their seuda, then they do not say ha'motzi at all and the bracha "al netilas yadayim" is not considered to be a bracha in vain. (Shearai Teshuva: 158, Yoreh Daya 331, Pischei Teshuva at the end of sif 6) However, if someone washed and made the bracha "al netilas yadayim" after tzais ha'kocavim, then they should make havdalah and drink from the wine and then without making any interruption, say ha'motzi. The reason why one is allowed to make havdalah in between is because it is not considered an interruption because havdalah is necessary for the meal, because without it one would not be able to eat at all. Back to the Top Havdalah #15: More mistakes with eating before havdalah:

If someone made a mistake by eating (water is not included in this) or even just tasting something on motzi shabbos or yom tov without hearing havdalah over a cup of wine, then, if they had already said atah chonantonu during ma'ariv then they do not need to go back and repeat the shmoneh esrei and should simply make havdalah over a cup of wine before continuing to eat, BUT, if he happened to forget to say atah chonantonu during davening, then as a penalty one must go back and repeat the shmoneh esrei and then make havdalah over a cup of wine. Saying Baruch Ha'mavdil ban kodesh l'chol does not help a person in this situation, only saying atah chonantonu does. If someone ate and did not say atah chonantonu during davening and disregards the fact that they are obligated to daven ma'ariv again and made havdalah over wine in order to continue eating, then they should no longer daven ma'ariv again because of the possibility that his tefillah could be a bracha l'vatala. If a woman mistakenly eats before hearing havdalah then she is not obligated to daven ma'ariv even if she forgot to say atah chonantonu during davening (assuming she davened ma'ariv) since women are exempt from davening. (MB: 106:4)

If someone does not have any wine or any other chamar medinah to make havdalah over motzi shabbos or yom tov but he knows that he will be able to get something with which he will be able to make havdalah over before noon on Sunday (or the next day for a motzi yom tov) then one should be strict and not eat anything before they make havdalah over a cup of wine (or other important beverage). (MB: 296:21) But, if the person is weak and it is difficult for him to wait such a long time without eating, or he realizes that he will only be able to get something to make havdalah over after noon on the next day, or he realizes that he won't have anything to make havdalah over at all, then it is permissible for him to eat immediately after one says havdalah during davening. However, for a person who is going to be able to make havdalah the next day, it is forbidden for them to eat anything on the next day until after they have made havdalah. If someone forgot to include atah chonantonu in their davening then in this instance they need to go back and repeat the davening and insert atah chonantonu before they eat. (MB: 296:16) Back to the Top Havdalah #16: Havdalah at Shul:

There is a minhag to make havdalah in shul so that those people who don't have wine in their homes will be able to fulfill their obligation of hearing havdalah said over a cup of wine. It is forbidden to bring wine, for havdalah, to shul while it is still shabbos, for example when one is coming to shul after sunset but before ma'ariv and will use the wine for havdalah. (MB: 254:43) However, if one will use it for shalosh seudas then it is permissible to take the wine, and if it would be difficult to get the wine to shul any other way then one may bring it with them so long as its still during the time where one is permitted to eat and drink.

When the chazzan says havdalah in shul he does NOT begin with "he'ny ail," instead he starts from the bracha of ha'gafen and then finishes havdalah from there. (Orach Chaim, Rama: 296:1 Aruch Ha'shulchan sif 8) The reason why we are accustomed to saying "he'ny ail," is because these pesukim give a siman tov for our requests and that we should have success. However, in shul motzi shabbos we say "v'yeetane l'cha" after ma'ariv and these pesukim suffice for giving a siman tov. Someone who forgot to say havdalah motzi shabbos and is making it up during the

next three days and a mourner during his first seven days do not say "he'nay ail," but rather start with ha'gefen. Back to the Top Havdalah #17: More Havdalah in Shul:

Even though the chazzan makes havdalah in shul, if a person has wine or anything else with which to make havdalah over at his home, then he should not rely on the havdalah that the chazzan says, not to say that its not valid for one to rely on it, but that its preferable to make havdalah at home so that one can say it for the rest of his family.(MB: 295:6)

The common custom is to let a child who is under the age of 13 but has reached the age of chinuch (5-6) to drink the wine from havdalah that was made in a shul. However, the chazzan or anyone else who had in mind to fulfill their obligation of havdalah and had in mind to also be covered by the ha'gafen bracha can also drink from the wine as well. The chazzan can have the intention to not fulfill his obligation when he says havdalah in shul, BUT, he must not drink from the wine and must give it to someone else to drink(the halachos of drinking the wine will be discussed later), either the child or someone else who fulfilled their obligation of havdalah from him, because if the chazzan drinks the wine then he has certainly fulfilled his obligation for havdalah because if he didn't then he would be unable to drink the wine since eating and drinking are forbidden until one fulfill's their obligation of saying havdalah over a cup of wine.\*\*\*

If someone is still in the middle of davening ma'ariv when the chazzan says havdalah in shul, then l'chatchila he should NOT stop in order to hear havdalah and then continue with his davening, rather he should simply continue davening and hear havdalah somewhere else. However, b'dievid, if he did stop his davening in order to hear havdalah then he has fulfilled his obligation but nevertheless he should not answer amen to any of the brachos (even if he is intending to fulfill his obligation for havdalah).

\*\*\* This is yet another reason that one of the married guys should not say havdalah on motzi shabbos in order that they will be able to go home and say havdalah for their wives. Back to the Top Havdalah #18: How to make say havdalah over wine

One should not change out of their shabbos clothes or remove the shabbos tablecloth (assuming one uses one) until after they have said havdalah and eaten their melavah malkah.(MB: 262:8)

The cup of wine that is used for havdalah has the same laws as the one that was used for kiddush, which are (in case anyone has forgotten, G-d forbid) It needs to hold at least a revi'is, it must be whole, without any cracks, breaks or chips, and it should be clean on the inside and out.

One should fill the cup up completely for havdalah and there are some people who have the custom to have some of the wine (or other permissible beverages) spill over from the cup in order that it should be a good siman for the week to come.(OC: Rama 296:1) Back to the Top Havdalah #19: Sit or stand? And how to say havdalah.

There are some people who have the custom to stand for havdalah, both the one making havdalah and those listening to him, because on motzi shabbos we are escorting the shabbos queen out by saying havdalah and since one can only escort someone out when they are standing, they then stand for havdalah.(MB: 296:27) However, l'chatchila, if someone is saying havdalah for other people then it is preferable for everyone to sit, because as I mentioned regarding kiddush, when someone is saying a bracha for someone else they need to show that they are "joined together" and this is accomplished through sitting.(MB: 296:27) Which means that if one has the custom to stand for havdalah then one should be strict to make sure that everyone who is listening to someone else make havdalah over a cup of wine should be standing close to him and not scattered all about.

A person making havdalah should pick up the cup with both of his hands in order to show the attachment he has to the mitzvah and should then place it in his right hand if he is a righty (for all those lefties out there, including myself, it goes in your left hand and simply reverse everything below), there is a custom to place the cup in the palm of your hand and have your upright fingers surround it (for all those kabbalists out there), the cup should also be lifted off the table at least a tefach in order that everyone should be able to see and recognize the cup, and one should hold the spices in his left hand. One begins by saying "He'nay Ale Ye'shuasi"(only begin here on a motzi shabbos), then the one making havdalah says ha'gafen, and then he should preferably transfer the cup to his left hand and the spices to his right hand, and then say the bracha over the spices, and then after he has smelled them he should place them on the table, and then say the bracha over the candle and look at the reflection in his fingernails on his right hand, place the cup back into his right hand and then finish havdalah and drink from the cup, all the while making sure not to spill on the tablecloth! The reason for all of this switchiness is because that anything that one makes a bracha on, he should be holding in his right(or left) hand.(MB: 296:29) One should also be careful not to set the cup of wine down while making a bracha because all of the brachos of havdalah are required to be said over a cup of wine.(MB: 296:30) Back to the Top Havdalah #20: Fast Havdalah:

Those who are listening to someone else make havdalah for them, should have the intention to fulfill their obligation of all the brachos of havdalah (wine,spices,light and ha'mavdil) through the one who is making havdalah, and they should not make any of the brachos by themselves (like the spices and candle).(MB:296:13) This is because, as was mentioned before, all of brachos for havdalah need to be said over a cup of wine, therefore, only the one making havdalah and holding the wine should make them. Everyone should be strict to smell the spices and get benefit from the light of the candle immediately after the brachos are made. However, if the one who is making havdalah continues with havdalah before everyone has a chance to smell the spices or get benefit from the candle, like what sometimes happens in shul, then they should smell the spices and get benefit from the candle without saying a new bracha after the person saying havdalah finishes and rather than doing so while he is still saying the blessing of ha'mavdil. I forgot to mention in the last e-mail that if for some reason a person did not have the intention to fulfill their obligations for the brachos over the spices or the candle (and thus obviously did not smell the spices or get benefit from the candle during havdalah) or before havdalah was finished their intention to smell the spices or get benefit from the candle left their minds (hesach ha'daas) then before they smell the spices or benefit from the candle after havdalah was said they should say the brachos.(MB: 297:13) Back to the Top Havdalah #21: Mistakes in the order of the brachos:

If someone made a mistake and said the bracha over the candle before he said the bracha over the spices, then he should derive benefit from the candle (this will be explained further later on) and after that he should make the bracha over the spices and then smell them.(MB: 209:6) Even if a person has not finished saying the bracha over the candle but at the time he said Hashem's name he was intending to say the bracha over the candle and then realized that he hasn't said the bracha over the spices, he should nonetheless continue with the bracha of the candle and afterwards say the bracha over the spices.(MB: 46:20)

If he is saying havdalah and at the time he mentions Hashem's name he is intending to say the bracha over the spices, and he makes a mistake and says the bracha over the candle, if he doesn't fix his mistake then he has fulfilled his obligation for the bracha over the candle, he should derive benefit from the candle and then say the bracha over the spices. But if he fixed his mistake by saying "Boray Moray Ha'aish Menay B'samim" then he has fulfilled his obligation for the bracha of the spices, should smell them, and then say the bracha over the candle.(MB: 209:6) Back to the Top Havdalah #22: Walking in late and still being yotzi:

If someone walks into a room after someone has begun to say havdalah but before they have said the bracha over the wine, or even after they have said the brachos over the spices and candle but before they have begun the bracha of ha'mavdil, and hears the entire bracha of ha'mavdil from the beginning until the end and he had the intention to fulfill his obligation through that havdalah then he has fulfilled his obligation for havdalah (if he would like to drink from the wine, he should say his own bracha since he didn't fulfill his obligation through the one saying havdalah). If he did not hear the bracha over the spices and the candle then after the one making havdalah has finished, he should make the brachos over the spices and the candle himself. However, if he does not hear all of the bracha of ha'mavdil from its beginning until its end, then he has not fulfilled his obligation for havdalah.

Someone who is making havdalah over a cup of wine and forgot to make the bracha on the spices or on the candle, and remembers after he finished the bracha of ha'mavdil but before he tasted the wine, he should then make the bracha over the spices, smell them, and then the bracha over the candle and derive benefit from it and then drink the wine. Back to the Top Havdalah #23: Drinking the Wine (its more complex than you think):

After a person finishes saying havdalah he should sit down first (if he is standing) and then drink the wine, provided that most of the people who were listening to his havdalah had already finished answering amen to his bracha. One should not make an interruption between the bracha and the drinking, whether it be a silent interruption (simply sitting down and not drinking) or by saying something like "shavua tov." One should also not put out the candle until he has at least drunken a little bit of the wine, one of the opinions says that because one does not need to put out the candle in order to drink the wine then he should l'chatchila drink the wine first.(MB: 296:4) The Lavusha Shered and the Magan Avraham give a different reason, which is that its a disgrace for a cos shel bracha for a person to spill the wine over a candle before he takes a drink from it.

L'chatchila, a person should drink a whole revi'is, without stopping, from the cup that was used to make havdalah, whether it had wine or another suitable beverage, and afterwards they should make the appropriate bracha achrona. B'dievid, a person can fulfill their obligation by drinking only a m'lo lugmov (cheekfull) from the cup used for havdalah, however, if one only drinks a m'lo lugmov he should not say a bracha achrona because of the concern that it would be a bracha l'vatalah since its unclear as to whether drinking less than a revi'is would require a bracha achrona. However, if a person ate a ka'zais of something from the "seven species"(those foods which require a the mi'ain shalosh bracha (al ha'micha or al ha'aitz) soon after

making havdalah, then when they say the bracha achrona for that food they ate, they can also insert the alhagefen bracha even though they may not have drunken a revi'is, since a person is already saying it for the other food they can add the al ha'gefen part in order to remove them from a situation where they would be in a doubt to say the bracha achrona over the wine.(MB: 208:82)

Back to the Top Havdalah #24: More on drinking the wine:

If a person does not even drink a cheekfull, or he does drink this amount of wine but over a period of time that is greater than "c'dai achilas pras" (about four minutes), then they have not fulfilled their obligation of havdalah and they need to drink another cheekfull and have it be within four minutes, but the person does not need to say havdalah again.(He does not need to say a new bracha rishona over the wine if the person had the intention to drink more wine in addition to that which he drank for havdalah, or simply didn't think about drinking more or not, however, if he only had intention to drink a little bit of wine, the amount he needed for havdalah and no more, then he would need to make a new bracha rishona over the wine in this case before he drank his second cheekful).

L'chatchila, the person making havdalah should be the one who drinks the revi'is or cheekful of wine. B'dievid, even if he doesn't taste the wine at all but gave it to one of the people who was listening and fulfilling their obligation of havdalah through him, even if this was a child who has reached the age of chinuch (5 or 6) and they drank a revi'is or cheekful then they have fulfilled their obligation. Even if he gave it to a number of different people (all who fulfilled their obligation through that havdalah), as long as a revi'is or cheekful was drunken between all of them then, b'dievid they have fulfilled their obligation of havdalah.

However, l'chatchila, a person should not make havdalah knowing that someone else will drink the wine for him. Rather, if for whatever reason he is unable to drink the required amount, then he should make havdalah with the intention to taste a little bit of the wine, and then give it to someone else to drink the required amount, otherwise, he should have someone else make havdalah and drink the wine.

Back to the Top Havdalah #25: Drinking some more wine:

There is a minhag that women should not drink from the cup that havdalah was made over.(MB: 296:6) However, when women must make havdalah for themselves, as was mentioned before, then they obviously should drink in order to fulfill their obligation. There is an opinion though, that women should not drink from the cup of havdalah only in cases when wine was used to make havdalah, the Har Tzi says that according to this its preferable that if a woman needs to make havdalah for herself then she should make it on something other than wine, like beer (yes, light beer is permissible) or some other chamar medinah.

The one making havdalah and also those that are fulfilling their obligation through his havdalah (even if they don't want to taste the wine), should not speak or leave the room until the one making havdalah has drunken a cheekful of the wine, or at the very least tasted the wine.

After the one making havdalah has drunken the required amount, he should pour some of the remaining wine onto a plate and put out the havdalah candle with the wine on the plate.(MB: 296:6) The reason why we extinguish the havdalah candle is to show that the only reason it was lit was to fulfill the mitzvah of havdalah, therefore, if someone used a candle that was not lit specifically for the mitzvah, then they do not need to put it out after havdalah.

There is also a custom to dab a little bit of the wine which was used to put out the candle onto ones eyebrows (and some people like to do their pockets too although this was not brought down by the Rema) in order to show the attachment they have to the mitzvah of havdalah.(OC 296:1 Rema) Back to the Top Havdalah #26: Spices:

The Chachamim instituted the custom of taking spices during havdalah on motzi shabbos and making the bracha "Borei Min'ei B'samim" The Gemara in Betza (33:B) says that the reason for this custom is because on motzi shabbos we lose our extra soul that was given to us on shabbos and smelling the spices "settles our minds." The Tur says that its to comfort the soul because of the departure of shabbos.

The minhag of smelling spices during havdalah is only said on motzi shabbos, but on motzi yom tov (whether its the beginning of chol ha'moed or yom tov that leads to chol) one does not use spices for havdalah. Even motzi Yom Kippur one does not use spices for havdalah, however, when yom kippur falls out on shabbos, some people have the minhag to say the bracha over the spices as one usually does on a motzi shabbos (after the bracha over the wine), and others have the custom to say the bracha over the spices after the person making havdalah has taken a drink from the wine. The reason they have this minhag is because when yom kippur falls out on shabbos, one is not given an extra soul because of the fast, and so they are worried that the bracha over the spices is actually a hefsek between the ha'gafen over the wine and the drinking since the spices aren't serving the purpose that they were intended for which was mentioned above. Back to the Top Havdalah #27: Spices

If a person does not have any spices, it does not affect whether a person is yotzi havdalah or not, therefore, if a person does not have any spices they should still make havdalah (obviously omitting the b'samin bracha). Nevertheless, if they find spices later that night, after they already made havdalah, then they should still make a bracha on the spices and smell them.

If someone does not have anything to make havdalah over, wine or any other chamar medinah, and is not planning on getting anything with which to make havdalah over before the end of the night, he still needs to make the bracha over the spices and smell them on their own, however, if he figures that at some point during the night he will find something that one can make havdalah over (wine or a chamar medinah) then its better to smell the spices during havdalah because it will be made over a cup of wine (or chamar medinah). Back to the Top Havdalah #28: Stuffed Up Nose:

Someone who is making havdalah and is unable to smell, like someone with a cold, should not make the bracha on the spices during havdalah, even if other people are fulfilling their obligation through his havdalah and they would be able to smell the spices. In this situation one of the people who are fulfilling their obligation through the person with the cold's havdalah should make the bracha over the spices and should have everyone there in mind, even the person who is making havdalah and cannot smell. After the person makes the bracha everyone (including the one making havdalah) should say amen and then smell the spices and the guy with the cold making havdalah should at least try to smell the spices.

Even though a person cannot smell, he is still able to say the bracha for the spices and fulfill the obligation for children who do not know how to say it. However, any adults who hear this bracha are not yotzi through this because according to Rav S. Auerbach zt'l, this bracha is for the sake of chinuch whereas adults have a "real obligation" to smell the spices. In this case though, where he says the bracha over the spices for the children and he can't smell, he should not say it in the normal order of havdalah but rather he should say it after he has drunk from the wine. Back to the Top Havdalah #29: Everyone has to smell (the spices that is):

It is a mitzvah for everyone to smell the spices themselves and one should not rely on the fact that since the one making havdalah smells the spices then through that they are yotzi. If there are a large number of people who are fulfilling their obligation through one person's havdalah then they should prepare a lot of containers with spices in order that everyone is able to smell the spices right after the bracha and that they should not have to wait to long for everyone to smell them and continue with havdalah. Rabbi S. Auerbach zt'l says that the one making havdalah should wait before making the bracha over the candle until everyone has smelled the spices, because according to him, everyone who listens to havdalah is considered as if they were making it themselves and therefore its proper that people should wait for everyone to smell the spices before saying the next bracha.

One who is listening to havdalah should have in mind to fulfill their obligation of saying the bracha "Borai Mi'nei B'samim" through the one making havdalah, but if they realize that they will not have enough time to smell the spices before the one making havdalah continues with the bracha over the candle (that person obviously did not read the halacha above), then they have two options, option one is that they should not have in mind to fulfill their bracha over the spices with the one making havdalah (also not say amen to that bracha) and then after havdalah is over they can make the bracha themselves and then smell the spices, or option two, they could still fulfill their obligation of saying the bracha over the spices through the one making havdalah and they should answer amen in this case, and then smell the spices after havdalah is over but without a bracha since they fulfilled their obligation already through the one making havdalah. Back to the Top Havdalah #30: Various laws about b'samin:

L'chatchila, one should use spices that require the bracha "Borai Mi'nai B'samin" when smelled, such as cloves, however, even if a person is using something that normally requires a bracha of "Borai Atzai B'samin" or "Borai Asavei B'samin" they still recite the bracha of "Borai Mi'nai B'samin" during havdalah. The reason is because most people are not experts in regards to determining the proper bracha for a given spice and therefore, to prevent people from making mistakes we only say the all inclusive bracha of "Borai Mi'nai B'samin" for the spices, regardless of what it is.

If someone were to use plants for the spices then one should hold them in the manner in which they grow (that is the root faces down and the top points up) when making the bracha.

Some people have the custom of having a special spice box for havdalah. In such a case it is preferable to open up the lid of the box and smell the spices directly, even if the box has holes in it.

One should not use liquid perfume for the spices because there is a doubt as to whether a person needs to make a bracha over this at all.

Spices that a person uses for motzi shabbos should not be thrown away in the garbage like ordinary trash since it was used for a mitzvah, but should be disposed of in a more dignified manner, such as wrapping it up first (double wrap I believe) and then throwing it away.

If someone were to make a bracha over some spices and then realize that it doesn't have any smell, then he must go back and first say the brach over the wine again because he made a bracha that has no applicability to havdalah (the bracha over the spices that didn't smell) and its considered an interruption between the bracha over the wine and the drinking, and if other spices are brought to him after he repeats the bracha over the wine then he should also say the bracha over the spices again. Back to the Top Havdalah #31: Candle:

There is a minhag that a person makes the bracha "Borai Mi'orai Ha'aish" over a candle during havdalah on every motzi shabbos, even if its a motzi shabbos and a motzi yom tov or on a motzi yom kippur (even if it falls out in the middle of the week), but one does not make the bracha after a motzi yom tov that falls out in the middle of the week. The reason for making the bracha over the candle is because it serves as a remembrance to the initial creation of fire which occurred on the first motzi shabbos with Adam Ha'rishon, because it was then that Hashem gave Adam the knowledge of how to bring forth fire by using stones.

If a person does not happen to have a candle on a motzi shabbos then they should nevertheless still make havdalah over a cup of wine and with the spices (but leaving out the bracha over the candle). However, if they find a candle later that night they should make the bracha over it then.

If a person doesn't have any beverage to make havdalah with (wine or any other chamar medinah) on a motzi shabbos, one should still make the bracha over the candle (as well as the spices as was mentioned earlier) during the night. However, if he determines that he will be able to find something later that night to make havdalah on, then its better that he should wait to make the bracha over the candle (and spice) during the normal seder of havdalah over a cup of wine.

\*\*\*Note. So in an earlier e-mail I discussd when the latest time one can begin a seuda on a shabbos afternoon is and that according to the Shmeirath Shabbos it seemed that it was at sunset on shabbos afternoon. However, if you look at the Mishnah Berura 299:1, it says that one can be lenient up until a half an hour before tzais ha'cokavim (stars come out) and I confirmed this with my Rabbi. So just to clarify, one may begin a seuda, for example shalosh seudas, until half an hour before tzais ha'cokavim and this seuda can continue for as long as one would like. A person can also begin stam eating (cake, fish, leftover cholent, drink) if they are hungry up until a half hour before tzais ha'cokavim, but since this is not a proper seuda a person must finish eating a little before half an hour before tzais ha'cokavim, one is only allowed to continue a seuda past this time. Hope this clears things up and if anyone has any questions let me know Back to the Top Havdalah #32: More candle laws:

It is a mitzvah for everyone to derive benefit from the candle during havdalah, even those people who are listening to someone else make havdalah should derive benefit from the candle (what this entails will be discussed in a later e-mail).

Someone who is fulfilling their obligation of havdalah by listening to someone else make havdalah should also have in mind to fulfill their obligation for saying the bracha of "Borai Mi'orai Ha'aish," over the candle, but they don't fulfill their obligation unless they are close to the candle in order that they will be able to derive benefit from its light immediately after the bracha. If a person is not close to the candle, then he has two options, he can not intend to fulfill his obligation for that bracha through the one making havdalah (and similarly should not answer amen to it), he should then make his own bracha over the candle and enjoy its light by himself after the person making havdalah has finished making havdalah and drunken from the wine. Or, a person may fulfill his obligation of the bracha over the candle through the one making havdalah (even though he is not near the candle, and in this case he should answer amen), and then one should enjoy the candles light after the person has finished havdalah but in this case since he has already fulfilled his obligation of saying the bracha he does not repeat it.

If there are many people who are fulfilling their obligation through one person making havdalah, like at shul, then its proper for them to prepare a number of candles in order to have them for those people who are listening, in order to not have to wait too long a time for everyone to find their way to a candle and fulfill their obligation of enjoying the light of the candle immediately after the bracha. Back to the Top Havdalah #33: More candle:

A woman who makes havdalah for herself, as was mentioned before, should not say the bracha over the candle during havdalah, because since she is not obligated to say this bracha it might be considered a hefsek between the bracha over the wine and the drinking. However, she is able to make the brachah over the candle after she takes a drink from the wine.

There is a minhag that a person should set aside a special candle made of wax for havdalah and it is preferable that the candle should be considered a "torch" which gives off a lot of light. To be considered a torch it should be composed of a number of different candles that are weaved or connected together, the reason why we use a number of candles attached together is because the bracha that is said over the candle is said in the plural, however, even if a person only has one candle they nonetheless say the same bracha. The candle mentioned above should li'chatchila be

used and a person should be strict in making sure that the flames touch each other. However, a single candle with a lot of wicks is not considered a "torch," rather its just a candle with a thick wick.

If a person does not have a torch then he should take two candles or even two matches and bring them close together so that their flames touch each other, however, if he only has one candle then it is permissible to make the bracha over that alone. Back to the Top Havdalah #34: Electric candle?

One should not make the bracha "Borai Mi'orai Ha'aish" over a fluorescent light bulb because this is not considered fire at all. As for the transparent light bulbs, there is a disagreement amongst the poskim as to whether one can make a bracha over it, there are those that say its permissible and there are those that say is not. If someone is in a case where they would need to use a light bulb for havdalah (lets say in a hospital for a patient and you can't have an open flame there) then one should ask their local orthodox Rabbi as to what would be the best thing to do. As for opaque lightbulbs, a person cannot make a bracha on these at all because even though he can benefit from its light, he cannot see the flame/filament.

One should not make the bracha over the candle until one is in a position to derive benefit from its light, which means that he must be close enough to the candle in order to distinguish between two different coins (by using its light). If someone isn't standing close enough to the candle and he is benefiting mainly from the electric lights that are in the room, then li'chatchila he should turn off the lights in the room in order that he can derive benefit from the candle, and even if a person is standing close to the candle its preferable to turn off the lights because this shows that the candle was lit for its light and not for a mitzvah. Back to the Top Havdalah #35: Checking your nails:

There is a custom that after the brachah over the candle is made that a person uses the light from the candle and looks at the palm of his right hand and then his finger nails. There are those people that bend their fingers into their palms and therefore look at their finger nails and palms at the same time and some people have the custom to do both, first bend their fingers into their hands and look at them and then spread them out and look at the backs of them, however, a person should not extend his fingers and look at the inside of his fingers rather he should specifically look at the backs of his fingers (the nail part). The reason for looking at the nail is because as was mentioned before, a person needs to be close enough to the candle in order to differentiate between two different coins by using the light of the candle, and by using our hands we differentiate between the skin and the nail and that is sufficient.(MB: 298:9) Another reason we focus on the nail is because it is constantly growing and so this is a good omen.(MB: 298:10).

Some people have the minhag of first looking at their fingers and then making the bracha over the candle and other people are strict to make the bracha over the candle and then look at their fingers.

All of the above mentioned are only minhagim and therefore if a person for whatever reason did not do any of them, that does not invalidate the bracha said over the candle so long as they derived some benefit from the light of the candle.

There is a custom to smell the havdalah candle after its been put out. The reason is given in the Aishel Avraham, which I neither have nor know where a copy is (its in sif 297, I think for all those who are curious), if anyone does find an answer then please let me know and I will pass it along. Although I have heard that its a segula for parnassah. Back to the Top Havdalah #36: Forgot to include havdalah:

If someone forgot to insert havdalah in the kiddush of a yom tov that falls out on a motzi shabbos, if he remembers in the middle of his seuda then he must interrupt it immediately and make havdalah over a cup of wine and make the bracha over the candle.(If he had intent to drink more wine during his seuda or he didn't have specific intention to not drink wine then he does not say another ha'gafen bracha) and then he may continue his seuda. If a person remembered he forgot to say havdalah in kiddush until after the seuda then he takes another cup of wine and makes havdalah over that with the bracha over the candle. If a person remembers during the next day or even the second day of yom tov, then he says havdalah only over the cup of wine and omitting the bracha over the candle. However, if he remembers only after yom tov is over then he says the normal havdalah over a cup of wine (only) which is "Ha'mavdil ban kodesh l'chol" (and not Ha'mavdil Ban Kodesh l'kodesh).

If the first night of pesach falls out on a motzi shabbos and he forgot to say havdalah in kiddush, then he should recite the haggadah until after the bracha of "Ga'al Yisrael" and then he should make havdalah over the second cup of wine, (that is, the bracha over the wine, then the bracha over the candle, and then havdalah "Ban kodesh l'kodesh") If a person remembers after the second cup or in the middle of the seuda, then he must interrupt his seuda and make havdalah over another cup of wine, if he remembers after he finished eating (after the afikomen or in the middle of bircas ha'mazon) then he makes havdalah over the third cup of wine, and if he forgets to make havdalah over that cup of wine then he makes it over the fourth cup. If he forgot to make it over the fourth cup then he takes another cup and makes

havdalah over that. Back to the Top Havdalah #37: Hamavdil Ban Kodesh L'Chol.....L'kodesh????

If someone made a mistake on a yom tov that falls out on motzi shabbos, and instead of saying Hamavdil Ban Kodesh L'kodesh they said Ban Kodesh L'chol, then he has not fulfilled his obligation and must repeat havdalah. In a case where he finished saying the wrong bracha and he remembers within three seconds of finishing the bracha and has not said another word (even the beginning of the bracha of shechianu) then he should say "Ha'mavdil Ban Kodesh L'kodesh" and he has fulfilled his obligation. But if he remembers after he said another word or after three seconds since he finished the bracha then he has to say havdalah over again (but not kiddush or the bracha over the candle and if he already said the shechianu then he does not repeat that either). In a case like this, where he has not tasted any of the wine, if he has not made any interruption since finishing with the wrong bracha of havdalah then when he says havdalah again he does not need to say the bracha of ha'gafen over again as well, however, if he did make a hefsek then he should recite the bracha of ha'gafen again before he says havdalah.

If, however, he did take a drink of wine after saying the wrong bracha, then he does not need to repeat the bracha when he repeats havdalah.

If one has diverted his attention from kiddush and havdalah before he has drunk a cheekful of wine then he must repeat both kiddush and havdalah but should not repeat the bracha over the candle or the shechianu.

If a person made a mistake on a yom tov that fell out on motzi shabbos and made the bracha over the spices during havdalah, he should nonetheless finish saying the rest of havdalah and then drink from the wine because the bracha over the spices and the smelling of them is not considered a hefsek. Back to the Top Havdalah #38: Tisha B'Av on Motzi Shabbos:

When Tisha B'Av falls out on shabbos or motzi shabbos a person should stop eating from before sunset due to the fast, however, all of the other laws of mourning (such as not wearing shoes and such..) do not take effect until after shabbos, therefore, a person should not take off his shabbos clothes before shabbos is over (before tzais ha'kocavim) and he should also not change his shoes in the shul until after he says "Barchu" in ma'ariv.

If a person does change his clothes and his shoes before ma'ariv (if ma'ariv didn't start until after tzais ha'kocavim to give people a chance to change at home before hand after tzais ha'kocavim) then he should say "Baruch Ha'mavdil Ban Kodesh L'Chol" before changing his clothes and shoes.

A person should not bring his shoes for tisha b'av to the shul on shabbos because this is clearly preparing for after shabbos, this also includes not bringing the a sefer of kinos (unless he will learn from it before shabbos is out).

After Ma'ariv a person should not make havdalah over a cup of wine and should not make the bracha over the spices, but he should make the bracha over the candle. The minhage is to make the bracha over the candle before reading the megillas Eicha. And if a person forgot to make the bracha, then he can do so after the megillah during the night (and only during the night) and like a normal motzi shabbos it's preferable to make a bracha over a torch (more than one candle held or weaved together). Back to the Top Havdalah #39: After the fast and havdalah before eating on tisha b'av

After the fast on a tisha b'av that falls out on a motzi shabbos or fell out on shabbos and the fast was pushed off until sunday, one does not say havdalah in davening ma'ariv after the fast (sunday night) even if a person forgot to include it in the previous ma'ariv (motzi shabbos). Before a person is allowed to eat they must make havdalah over a cup of wine and even though its generally not permitted to drink wine until after chatzos of the 10th day of av, it is permissible for the person making havdalah to drink the wine in this case and they do not need to give it to a child. A person should not make the bracha over the spices when making havdalah in this case and they should also not make the bracha over the candle even if they forgot to say it on motzi shabbos, they should also not say the pesukim of "henay ail yishuasi..." but should rather start with the ha'gafen bracha.

Someone who is sick and needs to eat on tisha b'av (that falls out on sunday), needs to make havdalah before they eat. If they need to eat during the night of the fast then they make havdalah that night (but they still do not make the bracha over the spices) or if they can hold out until the morning then they make havdalah then. The person making havdalah for the sick person is also able to fulfill the obligation of havdalah for the members of his household (or anyone else for that matter) even though they are not going to be eating. It is preferable to make havdalah over a chamar medinah and not wine, but if he only has wine then its preferable to give it to a child to drink, but if there are no children around then the sick person should drink the wine but only the required amount to fulfill the mitzvah of havdalah, which is a cheekful, but he should actually drink a revi'is in this case in order to remove himself from the doubt of whether or not he would need to say a bracha achrona on the wine. Back to the Top Havdalah #40: Candle for havdalah on Yom Kippur

For Havdalah on motzi Yom kippur, whether it falls out on a motzi shabbos or during the week, one makes the bracha over the candle just like after shabbos

although one does not make a bracha over the spices. The bracha is made to thank Hashem for separating Yom Kippur from the rest of the days because on Yom Kippur it is forbidden to use fire even for any type cooking, which is not the case with the rest of holdiays. While the same bracha is made on motzi Yom Kippur as it is on Shabbos, "Borai Mi'orai Ha'aish" their are different laws concerning what the brachah can be made over. Because the bracha is made to differentiate between the holiness of Yom Kippur and the rest of the days of the week, the bracha over the candle can only be made over a candle which has been burning throughout Yom Kippur or one that was permissibly (for whatever reason, for a sick person) lit on Yom Kippur or on a candle whose flame came from a candle that was lit throughout Yom Kippur. One cannot make a bracha over a candle which was lit after Yom Kippur or was lit on Yom Kippur but was not allowed to be lit and if a person does make a bracha over such a candle then they need to find a candle which was lit throughout Yom Kippur and repeat the bracha over that.

The proper thing to do is to leave a candle burning during Yom Kippur in ones house so that they will have a flame for havdalah. If a person did not do this then they may light a candle from a candle which was lit for the honor of the day and they should pronounce the blessing over both of them. If this is not an option then they may light a candle from a gas flame that has been burning throughout Yom Kippur and similarly they could also light from a pilot light that has been burning throughout Yom Kippur.

If Yom Kippur falls out on Shabbos then it is permissible to use a candle that was lit motzi shabbos/yom kippur but the custom is to be stringent and still use a flame that was burning all day.