

# ATorahMinute.com™



A PROJECT OF MIDRASH BEN ISH HAI (MIDRASH.ORG)

By the Hakham, Rabbi Ya'aqob Menashe

27 Shebbath 5779/Feb' 2 19 Mishpatim

## Mishpatim: Why the Rewards are Different

וּבִכְרָךְ אֶת־לֶחְמֶךָ וְאֶת־מִיָּמֶיךָ *And you shall serve the L-rd your G-d, and He shall bless your bread and your water* (Shemoth 23:25). You shall serve is written in the plural, but *your bread and water* is in the singular.

If a king of flesh and blood would wish to have a project completed, he would commission workers to work on it, and he would specify an amount for the entire job and pay each person his share. For example, if he would set a price of \$100 and there were 100 workers, he would pay each \$1. The king is only concerned with the fact that the job will get done. Whether each person pulls his/her weight equally or not, is not his concern. Therefore, he pays each one the same amount.

Haqadosh Barukh Hu (the Holy One blessed be He) works differently. He wants every single individual to be involved in serving Him because there is a difference between each person only putting in as much effort as he wishes and everyone working to the best of their ability together. A few fulfilling the commandment cannot be compared to everybody fulfilling the commandment.

That is why 'You shall serve' is written in the plural, because G-d wants every single individual to participate. But when it comes to the reward, even if every single person participates, the reward is not divided equally but in accordance with how each person performed the commandment. Whether a person served G-d in happiness or not, with the correct intent or not, and so on, will all have a bearing on how much reward he receives. That is why the reward is mentioned in the singular, to show that it will be custom made for each individual.

(See Alshikh on the Torah,  
Parashath Mishpatim)



מדרש בן איש חי  
Midrash BEN ISH HAI

## 5779 פרשת משפטים

### Habdalāh: Standing or Sitting?

The Shulḥan 'Arukh states that Habdalāh should be recited while seated. The Rama comments in his gloss that there are those who say it should be done standing and that this is the custom in Ashkenazi countries. The Mishnah Berurah comments that according to the Shulḥan 'Arukh, permanence (Qebi'uth) is required and that is why they should sit, but adds that since everyone has gathered together for the purpose of saying Habdalāh, it is considered to have permanence even when standing. And this is the custom of Ashkenzim, to stand during Habdalāh.

It would seem from this, therefore, that Sephardim should sit. However, this is commonly not the case and many Sephardim also stand. It says in Ben Ish Hai that even though Maran Yosef Qaro, 'a"ḥ, writes in the Shulḥan 'Arukh that we must sit, because standing is not considered to be Qebi'uth to enable one man to include the others with his prayer, and that, on the contrary, it is the Rama who states that Habdalāh is made while standing, nevertheless, we find that there are those (Sephardim) who accept the instruction of Maran, z"l, but, nevertheless, stand during Habdalāh. The reason being that everyone stands in order to accompany the king (Shabbath) who is leaving, and accompanying is always done while standing.

The Ben Ish Hai states further, that this is the custom in his city, that all Sephardim stand for Habdalāh. He adds that in Jerusalem there was no particular custom. Some stood while others sat.

While there is no right and wrong in this matter, the reason for standing, which is in order to accompany the king (Shabbath) who is leaving, is a very powerful one, and it appears to be the preferred method for reciting Habdalāh.

(See Shulḥan 'Arukh 296:6 with Rama. Ben Ish Hai, 2nd year, Parashath Wayyese, Oth 21. Mishnah Berurah, 296:27)

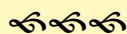
For the 'Illui Neshamah of  
Yeshayahu Ben David & Regina, 'a"ḥ

## Paper Towels on Shabbath

Paper towels and napkins that are made for one time use, may be used on Shabbath, to wipe one's hands or to wipe water that spilled on the table. The reason is that people do not use the paper towels, then squeeze out the water and use them again. They are simply thrown away after the first use.

If, however, the paper is very thick and is used several times, they fall into the category of cloth as far as *Seḥita* (squeezing) is concerned. As a result, they may not be used to wipe water off the table on Shabbath. According to the Shulḥan 'Arukh, before wiping one's hands, one must rub each one on the other, and then wipe them on the towel. According to the Qabbalah, each hand must be rubbed three times any time one does *Netilat Yadayim*.

(See *Derekh HaTorah*, 17:20-21, *Melekheth Dash*)



## If a Women is Running Late on Friday Afternoon

If a woman is running late because of matters she has to attend to on Friday afternoon, and gets home a little over half an hour or so before Shabbath, she must be very careful not to get into a possibility of desecrating Shabbath.

If she sees, therefore, that if she showers and changes, as is normally appropriate to do before lighting, there is a possibility of transgressing Shabbath, she should light the way she is, then change into her Shabbath clothes after lighting, and not take any chances on desecrating Shabbath. If she ordinarily prays *Minḥa*, she should pray before lighting, because *Minḥa* cannot be prayed after accepting Shabbath. This assumes that she will still have ample time to light. (See *A Torah Minute™*, vol. 3, *If a Woman Has No Time to Pray Minḥa Before Candle Lighting*)

Even though the lighting of the candles is the domain of the wife, if the husband sees that she is delayed in getting home, it is important for him to light and not be concerned that she might be upset that he did so.

(See *Ben Ish Hai*, 2nd year, *Parashath Nowah*, Oth 9. *Kaf Haḥayyim* 263, Oth 35)

## Women's Corner - by Rabbanith Ruth Menashe 'a"h

### Blessed Are You For Not Making Me a Woman, Part 2

The blessing which men recite *...for not making me a woman*, reflects the desire for a deeper connection with the Al-mighty. Building a closer connection can be achieved through the performance of additional *Miṣwoth* (commandments). The spiritual make up of women, on the other hand, is totally different.

Women, intrinsically, do not need the additional commandments, such as those that are dependent upon time (from which they are exempt), in order to reach their spiritual goals. Their spiritual level is attained by diligently performing those precepts that they are obligated to perform.

We can, perhaps, understand this better through the following illustration. Could we imagine an artist using a needle and thread to paint his/her painting? Or alternatively, would a seamstress sew a dress with a paintbrush and paints? Just like each artisan needs his or her own unique tools to fashion their creation, so too men and women were given their own special tools for reaching their spiritual goals.

This blessing shows us a deep understanding of the different natures of men and women and is not, G-d forbid, a degrading statement of a supposed inferior status of women. Rather, both men and women manifest their own unique roles and natures in their spiritual journeys.