ותלמדם "שתקי שתים" לעשות רצונך בלבב שלם

# ליקוטי ופסקי הלכות תרקל הלרם



שע"י "חדר הוראה" שכונת מנחת יצחק פעיה"ק ירושלם תובב"א – בראשות הרב חיים אהרן בלייער שליט"א

Halochos compiled by HaRav Chaim Bleier – Translated from the Hebrew edition by R' Zerachya Shicker

# Halochos of Neiros Shabbos

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### Hadlakas Neiros of Shabbos – 2

Vayeitzei 5782

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### **Reasons for the Mitzvah of Hadlakas Neiros**

### **Different Reasons**

- Last week (Issue 245), we discussed the background of the mitzvah and its reasons. Before discussing several halachos and principles relevant today that are dependent on the various reasons, we will briefly go through the main reasons. Then we will bring up several practical halachic ramifications.
- 2. The main reason for the mitzvah is for **oneg Shabbos** ( תוס' שבת דף : "מ"ה ע"ב ד"ה הדלקת רמב"ם פ"ה שבת ה"א: a person derives enjoyment from good illumination in the rooms in his house. Oneg Shabbos is primarily where the seudah is (Issue 245, par. 3, below par. 25).
- 3. Another reason is for kavod Shabbos. Some understand that it is an honor to Shabbos to be in an illuminated house (רש"י שבת דף כ"ה); others understand that lit candles inherently provide honor to a place, which is also why we light candles at an important seudah or at a chuppah even if they are not needed for their light (או"ז הל' ערב שבת סי' י"א ד"ה ומי, שו"ת אג"מ או"ח ח"ה סי' כ אות ל', פוסקי זמנינו).
- 4. An additional reason is for "shalom bayis" (במ"ג ע"ב). Some understand that it is to create peace between a man and his wife, as sitting in the dark causes discomfort and is not conducive to shalom bayis (רמב"ם פ"ד חנוכה הי"ד, יראים סי' תכ"ט); others understand that this refers to peace within the house, i.e., light is necessary to avoid bumping into things in the house and to prevent unpleasant occurrences that can cause a person distress (רש"ב, מרדכי סי' רצ"ב).

### **Condition for Fulfilling the Mitzvah**

- 5. There is a condition necessary to fulfill the mitzvah of hadlakas neiros: someone must benefit from the light. Whereas Chanukah candles are lit to publicize the miracle and a person may not benefit from their light (שר"ע סי תרע"ג ס"א), it is the opposite with Shabbos candles. The mitzvah is specifically for people to benefit from their light by not sitting in the dark whether because of oneg, kavod, or shalom bayis or for the increased honor of the Shabbos. If no one benefits from their light, the mitzvah was not fulfilled and the brachah was levatalah (שר"ע ס" רס"ג ס"ט).
- The benefit derived must fit with one of the reasons for the mitzvah, i.e., the candles must provide light in a place that would otherwise be dark or in a place where they enhance the honor of Shabbos, as will be explained.

### **Hadlakas Neiros Today**

7. Due to the advent of electric lighting, the nature of the mitzvah of hadlakas neiros of Shabbos is very different today than it was in the times of Chazal. The Torah did not change 1"n, but the reality changed and the halachos are affected accordingly.

### Times of Chazal

8. In the times of Chazal and up until the invention of electric lighting, the purpose of hadlakas neiros was to avoid sitting in the dark. They really lit candles every night, not just erev Shabbos, and they lit everywhere they needed to be able to see. But not everyone had the money to provide as much light as necessary so Chazal made an obligation to light candles in honor of Shabbos, primarily to provide proper illumination, either because of oneg Shabbos, kavod Shabbos, shalom bayis, or to prevent bumping into things.

### **Today**

9. However, today we rely on electric lighting and people do not sit in the dark, neither during the week nor on Shabbos. If so, how do we fulfill the mitzvah of hadlakas neiros to the extent that we can make a brachah? Like a lamp in the daylight (במ' חולין דף ס' ע"ב), candlelight does not add any illumination to a room with electric lighting, as even without the candles we would not be sitting in the dark. We must explain how we fulfill the mitzvah of hadlakas neiros in light of the reasons for the mitzvah.

### **Brachah on Additional Light**

- 10. The poskim argue whether a person may fulfill the mitzvah of hadlakas neiros and make a brachah in a spot where someone else already lit candles.
- 11. Some are uncertain about the ability to fulfill the mitzvah in a place where someone already lit Shabbos candles since the second candles do not add anything. Even so, they note that the minhag is to light with a brachah nonetheless (מ"ע"א). Others are not concerned. They write that multiple women may light with a brachah since the additional candles have the benefit of shedding light in every cornor of the house, providing more shalom bayis and extra joy (שו"ת מהרי"ל ס" נ"ג הובא בב"י סוף ס" רס"ג).
- 12. **Mechaber's opinion.** In view of this machlokes, the Shulchan Aruch writes (ח"ט ט"ט) that only one person should make a brachah to make sure there are no brachos levatalah. This is the Sephardi minhag (בן איש הי שנה ב' נה סי"א): one woman is motzi the others with her brachah. They do not make a brachah on additional light unless the second woman's candles are longer than the first woman's and will provide benefit after the first ones go out (ח"ב קצ"ט ס"ח).
- 13. **Rama's opinion.** However, the Rama writes that we make a brachah even on additional light (במ"א שכז); this is the Ashkenazi minhag. Every married woman lights with a brachah even if there are multiple women lighting in one room. If it is possible to light at somewhat of a distance from other candles, that is better (מקט"ו בשם השל"ה), but if that is not possible, they can light next to each other (ז"א, מ"ב סקל"ז).
- 14. **Today.** Nowadays that we have electrical lighting, how can one make a brachah at all on hadlakas neiros according to the Mechaber, who holds we do not make a brachah on additional light? Not only that, it could be that even according to the Rama, who holds we make a brachah on additional light, that was only back in the day when the room would be dark without Shabbos candles and every extra candle provided more light. Perhaps in a room with bright electric lighting, a candle does not give *any* extra light, in which case even according to the Rama one would not be able to make a brachah. There are multiple scenarios that must be discussed.

### Some Extra Light

15. **Candles on/near the table.** When the candles are lit on or near the table the seudos are eaten on, they provide a little extra light, even in a room with electric lighting. They create a bit more enjoyment and happiness, as the light of 100 candles is not the same as the light of 101 candles (מלשון מהר"ם שו"ת ד"ב ס" ר"ר"ם). Hence, according to the Rama, a brachah can be made.

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16. Candles far from the table. However, when candles are lit far from the table, e.g., at a spot designated for Shabbos candles in a simchah hall or in the dining room of a hotel or yeshiva, and there is electric lighting in the room, the candles do not even add a little light to the table and that reason cannot be used to justify making a brachah.

### Kavod Shabbos

- 17. However, another reason to light Shabbos candles with a brachah in a place with electric lighting is for kavod Shabbos (above, 3). At big formal meals, there are often lit candles on the table even though there is no need for their light; we escort a kallah to the chuppah with lit candles even by day; and candles are lit in a shul to fulfill the posuk, "With lights, honor Hashem."
- 18. Several poskim write that while the main reason for hadlakas neiros used to be about their light and preventing people from bumping into things, the main reason we rely on today to light with a brachah is for kavod Shabbos. Regardless of the electric lighting, the candles inherently add honor to the Shabbos even if their light is not needed (של"ת אג"מ או"ח ח"ה ס" כ" אות ל', הגרשו"א, הגריש"א, ארחות שבת). Accordingly, there are some aspects of the halacha one must be careful about, as will be explained.
- 19. Somewhere they add honor. If one lights in a room with electric lighting relying on the reason of extra kavod Shabbos, the candles must be in a spot where they do in fact add honor, e.g., in the room where the seudos are eaten or in an area where family members spend time while the candles are burning. If they are lit in a place people do not spend time, e.g., a hallway or an area people just pass through, one is not yotzei and cannot make a brachah.

### **Turning on the Light and Hadlakas Neiros**

### Ways to Fulfill Hadlakah According to All Opinions

- 20. Some people do not want to lechatchila rely on the heter of adding light (above, 14) or on the reason of kavod Shabbos (17). To this end, they look for ways to light in a way that avoids any problems with electric lighting. There are multiple ways to do this.
- 21. **Lighting candles when the lights are off.** Some make sure to light Shabbos candles when the lights are off; afterward, one of the family members turns on the light. The advantage of this is that at the moment of hadlakas neiros and its brachah, there was no light in the room and the brachah was able to take effect, thereby fulfilling all the reasons for hadlakas neiros. Only after hadlakas neiros does someone turn the light back on (גרש"ר, דיס"ר, הגריש"א שבות יצקב על ס" במ"ד הע' ל"ו, הגריש"א שבות יצחק פ"ו אות ו'
- 22. **Wife turns on the light when she lights candles.** Another suggestion is that the wife should turn on the lights for the mitzvah of ner Shabbos at the same time she lights the candles; the brachah works for both of them [even though the minhag is not to make a brachah when turning on the light alone (הציון סקנ"ז, חוט שני פפ"ג שער)]. She can first turn on the light in honor of Shabbos and then light the candles immediately afterward and say the brachah (הגי"ד, חוט שני פפ"ג ס"ח), or she can first light the candles, then turn on the light and immediately say the brachah (הגרשז"א).
- 23. **Long candles.** Another suggestion is to light long candles or put a lot of olive oil in the cups so that the flames are still burning after the lights go off on the Shabbos timer. If members of the family will still be awake and benefit from the candles alone, a brachah can be said on the Shabbos candles even if the lights are on when the candles are lit (ש"פ השו"ע שם ס"ט ובמ"ב ש).
- 24. **Common minhag.** In practice, the minhag of most people is not to be particular about this. They light with a brachah even though the lights are on, relying on the heter to make a brachah on extra light, like the Rama, and on the reason of kavod Shabbos (תשוה"ג שם).

### Where to Light in Different Circumstances

### Place Where the Seudah Is

- 25. Before electric lighting, there was value in lighting a candle in every room that was used, to prevent people from bumping into things. Nevertheless, the mitzvah was primarily for the place where the seudah was held for the reasons of oneg, kavod, shalom bayis, and preventing accidents (מ"ב א ס"מ"ם). Therefore, women made a brachah on the candle by the seudah table and that brachah covered candles anywhere else too (מ"ב סק"ב).
- Now that all the rooms in the house usually have electric lighting

   at least enough to avoid bumping into things there is no need to light anywhere other than the area of the seudah.

- 27. **Gave birth, in the hospital.** Strictly speaking, a woman who gave birth and is in the hospital does not need to light as she is yotzei with the candles lit in her house. Still, if she specifically wants to light, she should have in mind not to be yotzei with her husband's lighting at home. She should specifically light where she eats so that she can benefit from the light. If she eats in the dining room, she should light in the dining room; if she eats in her room, she should light in her room. In this case, she can also make a brachah.
- 28. However, if the hospital will only let her light in the hallway next to the nurses' station, as is generally the case, she can light if she wants but she cannot make a brachah. This is because she does not fulfill the mitzvah there as there is electric lighting and her candles do not add any light or honor since she will not be eating her seudah there.

### **Family Eating Out of the House**

- 29. If a family will be eating at someone else's house and coming back home after the seudah or if they are eating in one house and sleeping in another house that is not theirs, they must find a way to get benefit from the candles they lit in the sleeping house when they come back after the seudah. Otherwise, they are not yotzei and should not make a brachah on that lighting. Therefore:
- 30. **No electric lights.** If the lights are already off when they get home, they benefit from the candles by not bumping into things, and they do not need to sit by the candles and enjoy their light.
- 31. Should still be burning when they come back. If there are lights on at home, they must make sure the candles will still be burning when they come back home. Then, they can sit around the candles and enjoy their light; the light of the candles beyond the electric lighting provides extra honor for the Shabbos. It is best if they eat or drink while sitting there to benefit from the honor provided by the candles.
- 32. Turned on lights when they lit candles. If they had originally turned on the lights and lit candles together (above, 22) and said the brachah on both, when they come back home they can rely on the light of the long candles together with the electric lights they said the brachah on. In that case, they do not need to sit next to the candles since they fulfill the mitzvah through both light sources.
- 33. Staying by the candles until dark. If they do not have long candles, one of the family members can sit by the candles after they are lit until it gets a bit dark and the honor of Shabbos they provide is noticeable to him.
- 34. **Lighting at the host's house.** If one cannot light long candles and also cannot stay by the candles after lighting, they should light at their host's house in the spot where they will be eating. As long as there is electric lighting in their house and there is no danger of bumping into things, they can fulfill the obligation of hadlakas neiros in their host's house even though no candles were lit in their house. Some even prefer lighting at the host's house since that is where they will be eating, which is the main place for hadlakas neiros (דעת החזו"א פ"א אות כ', ארחות רבינו ח"א ה"נ אות ח"י).

### Guest

- 35. The poskim argue about the status of a guest, e.g., a bochur or girl, eating at someone's house without anyone lighting for them at home. Some say they are like one of the family members and are yotzei with the host's hadlakas neiros even though they are not regular guests dependent on that family, and even if the host did not have in mind when lighting to be motzi them ( שו"ע הגר"ז סוף סעי") שו"ע הגר"ז סוף סעי").
- 36. Others say the guest is not like one of the family members and they must light their own candle or contribute a perutah toward their host's lighting to be yotzei their chiyuv ( זכרו תורת משה לח"א סי' ב', ) (תורת שבת סקי"ג, חוט שני פפ"ג אות ח').
- 37. The accepted minhag is that a bochur or girl does not need to light candles or contribute a perutah; they are yotzei lechatchila with the lighting of the family they eat the meal with (היב למקור חיים ס"ז, ערוה"ש ס"ז, ערוה"ש.

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