The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
Fri, Feb 3 2023 ■ י"ב שבט, תשפ"ג
סימן ר"נ סעיף א'-ב'

Halacha Highlight

Personally preparing for Shabbos

Shulchan Aruch Siman 250 Seif 1 (b)
ישתדל להכין בעצמו
One should make an effort to personally prepare

Shulchan Aruch writes that even one who has slaves who are capable of preparing for Shabbos should make an effort to personally prepare for Shabbos in order to demonstrate honor for Shabbos. He then cites examples of Amoraim who personally prepared for Shabbos and concludes that one should use these Amoraim as models for the need for each person to put aside his honor and prepare for Shabbos rather than claim that it is beneath his dignity. For this reason, Shulchan Aruch writes that honoring Shabbos is a means of achieving honor and does not diminish one's honor (ע' ביה"ל ד"ה כי). Mishnah Berurah (סק"ג) points out that since this obligation is a personal obligation that rests on each person, it is a mitzvah that should be performed personally rather than through an agent. Biur Halacha (ד"ה ישתדל) cites Rambam who writes that it is an obligation for each person to prepare for Shabbos. Poskim note that Rambam's wording is stronger than Shulchan Aruch's who merely wrote that one should make an effort to personally prepare for Shabbos.

Shulchan Aruch HaRav (שם אחרון ובקונטרס סע' ד') explains that each person has a personal obligation to prepare for Shabbos, and since it is personal (חובת הגוף), it cannot be performed by an agent. Therefore, even if the preparation will take away time from Torah study one cannot shirk this obligation. However, the obligation is fulfilled by doing a single act of preparation that is clearly done to honor Shabbos. Any additional preparations that one does are a fulfillment of Shulchan Aruch's wording that one should "make an effort – השתדלות" to personally prepare for Shabbos but it is not obligatory. Therefore, when there are others who are available and capable of completing the rest of the preparations, one is not obligated to make those preparations, especially when it will take away from the time that one could spend studying Torah (פסקי תשובות אות ג').

Overview

Siman 250 Seif 1 (b):

Even if one has many servants to serve him one should make an effort to personally prepare something for Shabbos to honor it. R' Chisda would mince vegetables, Rabbah and R' Yosef would chop wood, R' Zeira would kindle a fire and R' Nachman would prepare his home and bring in utensils that are needed for Shabbos and take out weekday utensils. Everyone should learn from their example and should not think that this compromises their honor since it is honorable to honor Shabbos. Knives should be sharpened before Shabbos since this also honors Shabbos by preparing one's self for eating.

- The mitzvah to honor Shabbos rests on every person's shoulders. (M.B. 3)
- Seforim write that one should repent and be introspective on erev Shabbos since Shabbos is a time to greet the King and it is inappropriate to greet Him with filthy garments. Certainly one should clean the house from dust and dirt since this honors Shabbos and one should imagine that if a human guest were coming he would clean the house and make the beds, so certainly for the Shabbos Queen one should do so. (M.B. 3)
- Especially on short days one should prepare the house for Shabbos and when it is close to Shabbos one is obligated to use all of his strength to prepare for Shabbos. (M.B. 4)

Siman 250 Seif 2:

One should have a large quantity of meat, wine and sweets according to his means.