The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
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סימן רס"ג סעיף א'

Overview

Siman 263 Seif 1:

One should be careful to make a beautiful lamp and some people make it with two wicks, one for זכור and the other for שמור. One may add additional lights and kindle three or four and that is our custom. A woman who forgot to kindle lights one time should, for the rest of her life, kindle three lights since it is permitted to add to a fixed number to correspond to something else but one may not diminish from that number.

- Kindling lights is an expression of oneg Shabbos and in order to beautify the mitzvah it should be made beautiful. (M.B. 1)
- By doing so one merits having children who are Torah scholars, therefore, a woman should daven after kindling the lights and reciting the beracha that she should have children that are male who shine from Torah. Lights should be kindled in any room where one will walk on Shabbos and at least one light should be kindled even if one does not eat there. The beracha should be recited on the light that is kindled where they eat. (M.B. 2)
- If one has limited funds it is better to purchase one that is beautiful than two which are not. (M.B. 3)
- It is permitted to kindle one light from another but one may not kindle a match or other light from the Shabbos lights. The custom is to be stringent even regarding kindling one Shabbos light from another. (M.B. 4)
- Some use a candle of wax comprised of two twisted candles to commemorate Chazal's statement that זכור and שמור were said at once and this is an appropriate custom. (M.B. 5)
- Some people kindle seven lights corresponding to the seven days of the week and other kindle ten corresponding to the Ten Commandments but not all of them need to be placed on the table. (M.B. 6)
- If a woman forgot a few times she must add another light each time. If a woman did not kindle Shabbos lights due to circumstances beyond her control she need not add another light. Elya Rabba writes that a poor woman may add a little more oil than usual and that is sufficient. (M.B. 7)

Halacha Highlight

Penalizing a woman who forgot to kindle Shabbos lights

Rema Siman 263 Seif 1

אשה ששכחה פעם אחת להדליק

A woman who one time forgot to kindle Shabbos lights

Rema writes that a woman who, one Shabbos forgot to kindle the Shabbos lights, should thereafter kindle three lights as a penalty for not kindling Shabbos lights one week. Mishnah Berurah (סק"ז) explains that Rema was referring to a woman who was accustomed to kindle two lights but if a woman was kindling three lights and then forgot one week to kindle lights she must thereafter kindle four lights. In our times that we have electric lights in our homes to provide illumination, if a woman forgot to kindle Shabbos lights, according to Teshuvas Shevet HaLevi (שו"ת שבט הלוי ח"ה סי' ל"ג) she is, nevertheless, penalized. The reason is that women recite the beracha on Shabbos candles even though the electric lights are on thereby indicating that the presence of electric lights have no effect on the obligation to kindle Shabbos lights; consequently, if she forgot to kindle Shabbos lights she is penalized even though the electric lights were on.

There is a dispute amongst the Poskim regarding a circumstance in which a married woman began Shabbos at her mother's home and after eating the Shabbos seudah she returned home to sleep. Since she is returning home to sleep she is obligated to kindle Shabbos lights in her home but she forgot and did not kindle Shabbos lights in either home. According to Rav Moshe Feinstein (שו"ת אג"מ ח"ג סי' י"ד אות ו') she is obligated to add another light since she is subject to the penalty being that she forgot to kindle Shabbos lights that week. Teshuvas Shevet HaLevi (קובץ מבית לוי חי"א עמ' ל"ב) ruled that she is not penalized since she began Shabbos in a place where she was not responsible for the household and the penalty is imposed only when a woman is in her home where she is responsible for the household needs. Similarly, he rules that a man who was responsible to kindle Shabbos lights one week is not penalized if he forgot to kindle them since he is not responsible for the household needs.