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Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
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סימן תקי"ד סעיף ט'-י"א

Overview

Siman 514 Seif 9:

One may not twist thread into a wick nor may one singe it but if it is not hard enough one may press on it with one's hands to harden it. It may be soaked in oil (that does not have a flame burning in it).

- When one twists the threads he creates a utensil on Yom Tov. Authorities write that it is also prohibited to unravel a wick or untwist a wax candle even if one's intent is to kindle it. (M.B. 42)
- This removes the hairs so that it kindles easily. (M.B. 43)
- If the lamp is burning and one soaks a wick he will diminish the quantity of oil and diminishing the quantity of oil is prohibited. (M.B. 46)

Siman 514 Seif 10:

It is permitted to remove the char from a wick while it is burning but one may not sever the top of the wick with a utensil.

- The burnt portion which dims the light may be removed and the implication is that this may be done even with a utensil. However, some authorities understand that Shulchan Aruch prohibits the use of a utensil to accomplish this goal. In our countries the custom is to refrain from removing the burnt section, whether it is an oil burning lamp or whether it is a candle, regardless of whether this is done by hand or with a utensil. The only activity that is allowed is to comb out the burnt portion with one's finger since doing so will not extinguish the flame and it is certainly permitted to tilt the end of the wick to produce a better quality flame. (M.B. 47)

Siman 514 Seif 11:

When kindling the lights for Yom Tov one must recite the *beracha* אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו להדליק נר של יום טוב.

- When Shabbos and Yom Tov coincide one recites של שבת ושל יום טוב. (M.B. 48)

Halacha Highlight

Kindling Yom Tov lights

Shulchan Aruch Siman 514 Seif 11

המדליק נר של יום טוב

One who kindles the Yom Tov lamp

Shulchan Aruch (סע' י"א) writes that one who kindles lights for Yom Tov recites the *beracha* אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו להדליק נר של יום טוב. Mishnah Berurah (ס"ק מ"ח) explains that kindling lights on Yom Tov is a *mitzvah* the same as it is a *mitzvah* on Shabbos. The son of the Drisha, in his Introduction to Yoreh Deah, writes in the name of his mother that many women err when kindling lights on Yom Tov. When kindling lights for Shabbos common practice amongst Ashkenazim is to kindle the lights and then recite the *beracha*. The rationale behind this practice is the concern that the recitation of the *beracha* constitutes an acceptance of Shabbos and at that point it is prohibited to kindle the light. On Yom Tov, however, that is not an issue since even if one accepts Yom Tov during the recitation of the *beracha*, it is permitted to kindle the Yom Tov lights. Therefore, on Yom Tov the *beracha* should be recited before kindling the lights since that is consistent with the general principle that the *beracha* is recited before the performance of the *mitzvah* – עובר לעשייתן. Magen Avrohom (סי' רס"ג ס"ק י"ב) disagrees and contends that we do not differentiate between Shabbos and Yom Tov and since on Shabbos we kindle the lights before the recitation of the *beracha*, the same procedure should be followed on Yom Tov. *Poskim* write that both procedures are acceptable (פסקי תשובות אות כ').

Another issue debated by the *Poskim* is the correct timing for kindling Yom Tov lights. Since it is permitted to kindle the lights on Yom Tov, there are some authorities who maintain that they should be kindled after the men return home from the *bais haknesses*. The rationale behind this opinion is that in the Diaspora on the 2nd night the lights must be kindled after *tzeis hakochavim* so that one does not prepare on day 1 for day 2; therefore, to keep matters consistent the lights are always kindled after dark. Others explain that the reason is to demonstrate the lights are kindled to give honor to the meal. The dissenting opinion contends that the lights should be kindled before *shekiah*, the same time one kindles the Shabbos lights (פסקי תשובות אות י"ט).