The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
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סימן קע"ג סעיף ב'-ד'

Overview

Siman 673 Seif 2:

Lighting effects the mitzvah, therefore, if the lights go out before the minimal time has passed one is not obligated to relight. Even if the lights go out on erev Shabbos before kabbalas Shabbos and it is still day one is not obligated to rekindle the lights. Similarly, if after kindling the lights one attempts to adjust the flame and accidentally extinguished the flame he is not obligated to rekindle the light. If one wants to be stringent and rekindle the lights he should not repeat the beracha.

- If one kindled the lights where it is windy and the wind extinguished the flame one is obligated to rekindle the lights where there is no wind because this is comparable to kindling the lights without the minimal quantity of oil. Nevertheless, one should not repeat the beracha. It is obvious that if one sees that the flame did not grab hold of the wick properly and it will certainly go out in a moment one did not discharge his obligation and is required to rekindle the lights. (M.B. 25)
- Taz disagrees and maintains that if it is before kabbalas Shabbos one must rekindle the lights without repeating the beracha. (M.B. 26)
- Later authorities write that one should rekindle the lights and certainly on erev Shabbos before kabbalas Shabbos. If one already accepted Shabbos and the lights go out but there is still time to rekindle the lights it is permitted to ask someone to rekindle them. (M.B. 27)

Siman 673 Seif 3:

An earthenware lamp that was used one night for lighting becomes old and may not be used again on a second night; rather one must use a new lamp each night. If one only has old lamps he must burn it out each night in a fire. A metal lamp does not have to be new and one made from glass or glazed earthenware is the same as metal.

- It is written that one should make an effort to have a beautiful menorah in accordance with one's means and the lights should also be beautiful. (M.B. 28)

Siman 673 Seif 4:

There is no reason to replace wicks until they completely wear out.

- Reusing a wick is not demeaning to the mitzvah and in fact it is preferable since it is easier to kindle. (M.B. 29)

Stories to Share

Guarding the Lights

ש"ע סי' תרע"ד, ב': "הדלקה עושה מצוה ...אם כבתה קודם שעבר זמנה אינו זקוק לה"

Working out where to light the menorah, especially when children are nearby. Like moths, children are naturally drawn to fire. Unfortunately, this does not bode well for a menorah lit outside in a glass box as is commonly done in Eretz Yisrael, especially if one lights his menorah lower than ten tefachim off the ground.

One Yerushalmi was consumed with frustration. After the first time his candle went out early, he rebuked the unruly children in his neighborhood, but to no avail. They ran back and forth and somehow the moment he left the lights unattended, they went out. This man began to light another menorah in his house to be sure he discharged his obligation in some manner. But he wondered if there wasn't something else he should be doing. Although as we find on today's amud, the mitzvah is lighting the menorah, it is still a question if he must relight the candles if they go out, especially if he knows that the neighborhood children are prone to "hasten their demise." This might be compared to one who lights in a manner in which the lamps cannot possibly stay lit. Maybe his menorah outside was invalid according to all opinions?

When this question reached Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv, zt"l, he was short and to the point. "If one knows at the children of his neighborhood are prone to put his candles out accidentally when they are placed below ten tefachim, he should place them higher. But if this won't help or isn't practical, he must stand outside and make sure no one puts out his menorah."

When someone objected that this constituted bitul Torah, Rav Elyashiv rejected his point out of hand. "The entire mitzvah of lighting is also bitul Torah. Just like one must be mevatel Torah to light, one must also be mevatel to ensure that the mitzvah is fulfilled!"

פניני חנוכה

Halacha Highlight

Obtaining a beautiful menorah

Mishnah Berurah Siman 673 Seif Koton 28

שיטריח לעשות לו מנורה יפה לפי כחו

One should make an effort to make the nicest menorah that he can

Mishnah Berurah (ס"ק כ"ח) cites sefarim who write that one should make an effort to obtain the most beautiful menorah that he can. Kaf HaChaim (אות ס') cites Sefer Chessed L'Avrohom who enumerates the hierarchy of fifteen different materials that could be used for the Chanukah menorah. At the top of the list are gold and then silver and eighth on the list is glass. Poskim discuss the practice nowadays to insert glass bowls into which the oil is poured into one's menorah. Does the fact that the oil is placed in the glass bowls make it as though one is kindling the lights in glass? Teshuvas Shevet HaLevi (ח"ח סי' קנ"ז) suggests that the matter revolves around the question of whether it is necessary for the Chanukah light to be kindled in a vessel or not. Since it seems from the Poskim that a vessel is not essential to the mitzvah and the menorah merely beautifies the mitzvah, one could suggest that the glass bowls are subordinate to the gold or silver menorah and it is still considered as though one is lighting the Chanukah lights in the preferred menorah.

Shulchan Aruch (סע' ד') writes that it is unnecessary for one to use new wicks every night. Some Poskim explain that the reason it is unnecessary to change the wicks is that once the wicks were used for the mitzvah it is appropriate to continue to use them for the mitzvah (חיי משה הע' מ"ו). A second rationale to reuse the old wicks is that used wicks ignite better than new wicks. There are authorities who maintain that although there is no obligation to change wicks every night there is a custom to use fresh wicks each night (חיי משה הע' מ"ז). Some suggest that when reusing wicks one should make sure to take the wick that was used yesterday and move it over so that it will be lit first on the following night and so on each night. The rationale is that once it was used for the primary mitzvah (i.e. the first light) it should continue to be used for that purpose because otherwise it would serve a less sacred purpose (פסקי תשובות אות י"ב).