

# In Hilchos Shabbos

You have heard the shaylos . . .  
Now learn the issues & the opinions

## Candle Lighting Part 2: Eating Out

A summary of the weekly Wednesday night shiur by **Rabbi Shmuel Stein** at the Miami Beach Community Kollel / To receive a copy send an email to [InHilchosShabbos@gmail.com](mailto:InHilchosShabbos@gmail.com)

Last week, In part I of this chapter we dealt with the basic *halachos* of *hadlakas neiros*. We will now discuss the requirement to benefit from the Shabbos candles and how it relates to eating out on Shabbos.

### Benefiting from the Shabbos Candles

In the previous chapter we discussed the three reasons for lighting Shabbos candles:

1. *Kavod Shabbos*: They add *honor* to the Shabbos table
2. *Oneg Shabbos*: They enable us to *enjoy* our meal
3. *Shalom Bayis*: They promote *domestic harmony*

It is clear that the purpose of lighting the Shabbos candles is to bring these benefits to one's home, and therefore they must be lit in a way that they provide these benefits. In fact, the *Shulchan Aruch*<sup>1</sup> states that if one lights the candles but does not derive any benefit from their light, she has not fulfilled her obligation and the *beracha* recited when lighting the candles was recited in vain. Accordingly, one must ensure that the Shabbos candles are lit in a place that one can derive benefit from them.

### Benefiting from the Shabbos candles in the presence of electric lights

The advent of electric lights greatly complicates the *mitzva* of *hadlakas neiros*. The *poskim* question whether nowadays, when our homes are well lit with electric lights, one can properly fulfill the *mitzva* of *hadlakas neiros* by merely lighting the Shabbos candles, since they do not add any benefit or enjoyment to the home. In order to fully understand this issue let us quickly review the *halacha* of *Tosefes Ohr*.

#### Tosefes Ohr: Providing additional light

The *Shulchan Aruch*<sup>2</sup> discusses a situation where two or more women are eating the Friday night meal at the same table. Once the first woman lights Shabbos candles, there is already light at the table. Perhaps the remaining women may not light Shabbos candles at the table since the additional candles will not bring a complete benefit to the meal. The *Shulchan Aruch* and Rema disagree on this issue:

**The Shulchan Aruch** rules that the remaining women should not light additional Shabbos candles there, as one does not fulfill the *mitzva* of *hadlakas neiros* by merely providing *additional* light.

**The Rema** rules that one does fulfill the *mitzva* of *hadlakas neiros* even when only providing additional light, and therefore the remaining women may also light Shabbos candles there.<sup>3</sup>

Accordingly, some *poskim*<sup>4</sup> explain that based on the ruling of the Rema we can explain why it is permitted to light Shabbos candles in the presence of electric lights. Although the electric lights illuminate the room, since the Shabbos candles provide *additional* light one can still fulfill the *mitzva* of *hadlakas neiros*. However, other *poskim*<sup>5</sup> question this explanation, as they argue that one cannot compare the ruling of the Rema to lighting candles in the presence of electric lights. Electric lights completely illuminate the entire room and the Shabbos candles provide almost no benefit at all and we cannot even consider the Shabbos candles to be producing *additional* light.

Other *poskim*<sup>6</sup> suggest a different explanation to permit lighting the Shabbos candles in the presence of electric lights. Although the candles are not necessary to illuminate the room, having a meal where lit candles are clearly visible still adds an atmosphere of *kavod* (honor) to the Shabbos *seuda*. Consequently, one fulfills the *mitzva* of *hadlakas neiros* by merely lighting the Shabbos candles, even in a room lit with electric lights. According to this reason, it would seem that one must light the Shabbos candles near the table where he is eating, because if the candles are lit a distance away from the table they do not add honor to the Shabbos *seuda*.<sup>7</sup>

Nevertheless, Rav Moshe Feinstein<sup>8</sup> and other *poskim*<sup>9</sup> rule that the most acceptable way to fulfill the *mitzva* of *hadlakas neiros* nowadays is by turning on the electric lights in the room immediately before lighting the Shabbos candles. By doing this, one includes the electric lights, which illuminate the entire room, in the *mitzva* of *hadlakas neiros*, fulfilling the *mitzva* with both sources of light. (See part I of this chapter with regard to whether it is possible to fulfill the *mitzva* of *hadlakas neiros* with the use of electric lights alone.)

#### How Long must the Candles Burn?

Since the main purpose of lighting the Shabbos candles is to benefit the Friday night meal, one must ensure that the candles will burn and provide light for at least part of the meal.<sup>10</sup> It is preferable though that the candles burn for the entire meal.<sup>11</sup> If one lights small candles that extinguish after a short amount of time and do not benefit the Shabbos *seuda*, the *mitzva* of *hadlakas neiros* has not been fulfilled and the *beracha* recited was in vain.<sup>12</sup>

#### The Proper Place to Light Shabbos Candles

As long as the candles are lit in a place where one will benefit from their light on Shabbos, the *mitzva* of *hadlakas neiros* has been fulfilled as doing so promotes tranquility and peace in one's home.<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless, the *Mishna Berura*<sup>14</sup> emphasizes that since the main purpose of the Shabbos candles is to bring honor and enjoyment to the Shabbos meal, they should preferably be lit in a place that will bring light to one's Shabbos table. The *Mishna Berura*<sup>15</sup> adds that in addition to lighting candles at one's table, one should ensure that all the rooms of the house are sufficiently lit, in order to promote tranquility and peace in his home.<sup>16</sup>

#### Placing the candles where one does not benefit from their light

As cited above, the *Shulchan Aruch*<sup>17</sup> rules that if the Shabbos candles are lit in a place where one will not benefit at all from the light of the candles, the *mitzva* of *hadlakas neiros* has not been fulfilled. The *poskim* raise the following issue: It is not uncommon when eating at a *simcha* or staying at a hotel, for everyone attending to light candles at a communal table set up outside the dining room. Very often the candles are lit in a place where they will neither enhance the Shabbos meal nor bring tranquility to the home, and there is no benefit derived from them and seemingly does not fulfill the *mitzva* of *hadlakas neiros*.<sup>18</sup> Although some *poskim*<sup>19</sup> try to justify this custom, the majority of *poskim*,<sup>20</sup> including Rav Moshe Feinstein,<sup>21</sup> ruled that lighting the Shabbos candles in such a manner is not in accordance with *halacha*, and any *beracha* recited over the candles is in vain.

1 263:9 2 263:8 and Rema there 3 According to the Rema one may recite a *beracha* on *Tosefes Ohr* as well (see *ibid*) 4 *Chut Shani* 4:83:9; the Admor of Tzantz-Klausenberg (cited in *Sefer Pnei Shabbos*, p. 164). See *Kovetz Halachos* (Shabbos 1:7:58), where Rav Shmuel Kamenetzky argues that even the *Shulchan Aruch* (who generally does not agree with the leniency of *Tosefes Ohr*) will agree that one may fulfill the *mitzva* of *hadlakas neiros* in the presence of electric lights. 5 *Nishmas Shabbos* 1:345. This also seems to be the opinion of Rav Moshe Feinstein (*Igros Moshe*, O.C. 5:20:30), where he discusses the issue of lighting Shabbos candles in the presence of electric lights and does not permit it based on the explanation of *Tosefes Ohr*. 6 The Admor of Tzantz-Klausenberg (cited in *Sefer Pnei Shabbos*, p. 293), *Nishmas Shabbos* 1:345 (p. 291). There are also a number of other reasons given by the *poskim* to explain why one fulfills the *mitzva* of *hadlakas neiros* in the presence of electric lights: Rav Moshe Feinstein (*Igros Moshe*, O.C. 5:20:30) suggests that although it may be generally true that while the electric lights are on we do not benefit from the Shabbos candles, were there to be a power outage the Shabbos candles would be necessary to provide light. Therefore, lighting them fulfills the *mitzva* that *Chazal* instituted even when the room is lit with electric lights. For other explanations as to why one may light the Shabbos candles in the presence of electric lights, see *Ohr leTzion* 2:13. 7 *Nishmas Shabbos* 1:345 (p. 292) 8 Cited in *The Radiance of Shabbos*, p. 20, notes 3 and 4 9 *Chut Shani* 4:83:9; *Nishmas Shabbos* 1:345 (p. 290, number 2). Rav Yaakov Kamenetzky (*Emes l'Yaakov*, O.C. 263, note 274) suggests a slightly different order. He explains that the woman should first light the Shabbos candles, then turn on the electric lights, and then recite the *beracha* on both the Shabbos candles and the electric lights. 10 *Shemiras Shabbos k'Hilchasa* 43:17 11 *Ibid.*, from *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* 75:2 (see *Nishmas Shabbos* 1:308, 309) 12 *Shemiras Shabbos k'Hilchasa* 13 *Mishna Berura* 263:45 14 *Ibid.*; *Nishmas Shabbos* 1:306 15 *Mishna Berura* 263:2 16 One should try to ensure that electric lights illuminate the other rooms and hallways of the home until the time when the members of the family go to sleep, in order to promote tranquility and peace in his home. (See *Nishmas Shabbos* 1:308; *Kovetz Halachos*, Shabbos 1:7:46) 17 *Shulchan Aruch* 263:9; *Mishna Berura* 263:41. 18 Another example of this *halacha* is with regard to lighting Shabbos candles in shul. One may not light Shabbos candles in a shul if he does not intend to eat the Shabbos meal there. Since the candles are lit in a place where they will neither enhance the Shabbos meal nor add to the tranquility of the home, there is no benefit from their light (Rav Yitzchak Reichman) 19 Rav Shmuel Kamenetzky (*Kovetz Halachos*, Shabbos 1:7:66, note 108). He explains that since people enjoy seeing the many candles lit and sometimes wait around for a little while looking at them, we can consider this to be benefiting from the candles. He concludes, "This seems to be the explanation for this custom, and we can allow the custom of the Jewish people to remain." If one does light candles in the communal area she should at least wait near them for a little while in order to benefit from their light (*Pnei Shabbos* 1, p. 164). 20 *Chochmas Tzvi* 1:19; *Be'er Moshe* 1:15 21 Quoted in *The Radiance of Shabbos*, p. 13, note 29 22 *Ibid.*, quoting Rav Moshe Feinstein 23 *Ibid.*, quoting Rav Moshe Feinstein

In light of this, Rav Moshe Feinstein<sup>22</sup> instructed that one must make sure she lights the Shabbos candles in a place where benefit can be derived from their light. This can be accomplished by lighting the candles at her table in the dining room, or in her private room. If this is not possible, the Shabbos candles should at least be lit anywhere in the dining room in a place where the diners can benefit from their light. If this is also not possible, she should not use candles to fulfill the *mitzva* of *hadlakas neiros*; rather, she should turn on an electric light in her private room (without reciting a *beracha*).<sup>23</sup>

## Eating Out

The *poskim* discuss the correct place to light the Shabbos candles in the following scenario: A family is eating the Friday night *seuda* in someone else's home but plan to return to their home to sleep. Should the candles be lit at their home or where they are eating? The *poskim* give two options:

**1: Where they are eating (at the home of their hosts):** Some *poskim*<sup>24</sup> recommend in such a situation to light the candles where the family will be eating. Since the primary reason for lighting the Shabbos candles is have light at the Friday night meal,<sup>25</sup> it is preferable to light candles at the home of their host. Although hostess already lit candles at the table where the meal is taking place and the room is already illuminated the guest can still light her Shabbos candles. We have already discussed that Ashkenazim who follow the ruling of the Rema<sup>26</sup> may recite a *beracha* over the Shabbos candles so long as they provide *additional* light.<sup>27</sup> Sephardim who follow the ruling of the *Shulchan Aruch*<sup>28</sup> should not recite a *beracha* when lighting in a place in a place where someone else already said a *beracha* on her Shabbos candles.

**2: Where they are sleeping (at their own home):** Many *poskim*<sup>29</sup> rule that it is preferable in such a situation to light the candles where the family will be sleeping rather than where they will be eating. Since the host family will light their own Shabbos candles, the benefit derived from the guest's candles is minimal.<sup>30</sup> It is preferable to light in a place where the candles will bring light to a place that otherwise wouldn't have any. Although they will not be eating the Friday night meal at home they can nevertheless light candles at home as it will provide light that will promote *Shalom Bayis* (domestic harmony).

If one chooses to light the Shabbos candles at home, she must make sure to derive benefit from the candles that are being lit in their home when they return, otherwise the *beracha* she recited when lighting the candles was in vain.<sup>31</sup> This can be accomplished by lighting extra-long candles or tea lights that will remain lit until the family returns home, when they can benefit from the candles (e.g., eat fruit or cake by their light).<sup>32</sup> Another way to ensure deriving benefit from the Shabbos candles is to remain at home until after dark and thereby use the light of the candles (e.g., daven or read from their light) before going to one's host's house.<sup>33</sup> If it is impossible to derive benefit from the candles lit at home, one should follow the first option and light candles where the family will be eating.<sup>34</sup> (In such a situation, Sephardim who follow the ruling of the *Shulchan Aruch*<sup>35</sup> should not recite a *beracha* when lighting in a place where someone else already said a *beracha* on her Shabbos candles.)

## Driving after lighting Shabbos candles

A family eating out the Friday night meal and lights the Shabbos candles in their home (as per option number two above), after lighting candles at home may wish to drive to the place where they are eating before Shabbos actually begins. However, as we discussed last week, once a woman lights Shabbos candles she generally accepts Shabbos and performing *melacha* is prohibited even if Shabbos did not yet begin. This of course would create a problem with driving over to the host's house. We also discussed that it is questionable whether a woman may make a *tenai* (stipulation) not to take Shabbos upon herself when lighting Shabbos candles, and should only be done in a time of need. It is not always clear whether or not eating at a friend's house is considered a time of need, and this may need

to be determined on a case-by-case basis.<sup>36</sup> One who wants to make a *tenai* not to accept Shabbos upon herself when she lights the Shabbos candles should consult a Rav.

## Staying at one's parent's home for Shabbos

If a married daughter (and her family) are staying at her parents' home for Shabbos, she technically becomes part of her parents' household since she is staying there the entire Shabbos, and would not need to light her own Shabbos candles.<sup>37</sup> Nevertheless, the custom is that she still lights Shabbos candles. Women have a special connection to the *mitzva* of *hadlakas neiros*, and most want to light their own Shabbos candles. Therefore, they specifically have in mind not to fulfill their *mitzva* with someone else's candle lighting so that they can light their own Shabbos candles.<sup>38</sup> They may even light them in the same place as the hostess, as the Rema<sup>39</sup> rules that lighting additional candles is permitted and one may recite a *beracha* even on candles that are lit for *additional* light.<sup>40</sup>

## When a Family Member Is away from Home

In part I of this chapter we explained that although everyone in the household is obligated in the *mitzva* of *hadlakas neiros*, *Chazal* required only one member of the family (generally the wife) to light them. These *halachos* become rather complex when one of the family members is away from home for Shabbos. Does that member of the family need to light their own Shabbos candles in the place they are staying for Shabbos? In the following paragraphs we will review the *halachos* of a family member who is away for Shabbos. However, due to the many intricacies involved in these *halachos* one should consult a Rav for guidance on these issues.

The *Shulchan Aruch*<sup>41</sup> rules that a family member can be included in the *hadlakas neiros* of the household only if they are home for Shabbos. If one of the members of the family is away from home for Shabbos, they require their own *hadlakas neiros*. For example:

- Yeshiva or seminary students who are not living at home do not fulfill their obligation of *hadlakas neiros* with the Shabbos candles lit by their mother, and therefore must ensure that their *mitzva* of *hadlakas neiros* is properly fulfilled.<sup>42</sup>

Nevertheless, there are many instances where the family member who is away from home might still not have to light his or her own Shabbos candles, such as if they are a guest at someone's home for the entire Shabbos, or if they eat the Friday night meal at someone else's home but sleeps in their own apartment.<sup>43</sup> One should consult a Rav in any of these situations.

**Spouses.** There is a distinction between a spouse and other members of the family. If a husband is away from home for Shabbos, he fulfills his obligation with the candle lighting his wife performed at home.<sup>44</sup> For example:

- A husband who is away for Shabbos on a business trip does not need to light his own candles in the place he is staying, as he fulfills his obligation of *hadlakas neiros* with the Shabbos candles lit by his wife at home.<sup>45</sup>

Nevertheless, in order to ensure a peaceful and tranquil Shabbos he must still ensure that the place where he is staying is properly lit. He can fulfill this requirement by ensuring that electric lights are turned on before Shabbos begins.<sup>46</sup>

The same *halacha* should technically apply when a wife is away from home, and she should fulfill her obligation to light Shabbos candles with the lighting performed by her husband at home. Nevertheless, as we mentioned earlier, the custom is for women to always light their own Shabbos candles. In this case as well, the custom is for a woman who is away from home to light her own Shabbos candles where she is staying.<sup>47</sup>

Due to the numerous factors that may vary in each particular situation, a Rav should be consulted with regard to these issues.

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The intention of this summary is to discuss common practical *shaylos*. One should consult a Rav concerning *p'sak halacha*.

24 Rav Shmuel Kamenetzky (*Kovetz Halachos*, Shabbos 1:7:53, note 90; 7:65); see *The Radiance of Shabbos*, p. 12 25 Rema 263:10 26 263:8 27 See however *Nishmas Shabbos* (1:381,383) who questions whether nowadays, when our homes are well lit with electric lights and the additional Shabbos candles that the guest lights provide almost no benefit at all, if we can consider these Shabbos candles to be providing *additional* light. He suggests that perhaps in such a situation the daughter may light two (small) tea lights on the Shabbos table before her mother lights her own Shabbos candles. This way, at the time when the daughter lights her candles it provides light to the room. Then, when her mother lights her larger Shabbos candles (in the *leichter*) she too fulfills her *mitzva*, as these candles provide additional light for the Shabbos table. 28 263:8 29 Rav Moshe Feinstein (quoted in *The Radiance of Shabbos*, p. 11, note 23); *Divrei Yatziv* 119; *Nishmas Shabbos* 1:412; *Chovas haDar*, p. 93, note 46 30 Ibid. *Nishmas Shabbos* also argues that since the family's main "place of dwelling" is their own home and not their friends' it is preferable to light at home. 31 Ibid.; *Be'er Moshe* 8:68 32 See *Be'er Moshe* *ibid*. It is preferable to also include the electric lights in one's home in *hadlakas neiros* by turning on the lights immediately before lighting the Shabbos candles. See *Divrei Yatziv* 119; *Mishneh Halachos* 5:41 33 *Kitzur Hilchos Shabbos* 1:9 (see *The Radiance of Shabbos*, p. 11, note 24) 34 *The Radiance of Shabbos*, p. 12 35 *Shulchan Aruch* 263:8 36 See Rabbi Yosef Viener, *Contemporary Questions in Halacha and Haskafah* (Brooklyn: Mesorah Publications, 2011), pp. 123–124 37 *Shulchan Aruch haRav* 263:15 38 Rav Moshe Feinstein (cited in *The Radiance of Shabbos*, p. 11). See also *Tehilla l'David*, end of s"K 7 39 263:8 40 See *The Radiance of Shabbos*, p. 11, note 22. See however *Nishmas Shabbos* (1:381,383) cited above in note 27, who questions whether nowadays, when our homes are well lit with electric lights and the additional Shabbos candles that the guest lights provide almost no benefit at all, if we can consider these Shabbos candles to be providing *additional* light. In such a situation, Sephardim who follow the ruling of the *Shulchan Aruch* (263:8) should not recite a *beracha* when lighting in a place where someone else already said a *beracha* on her Shabbos candles.) 41 *Shulchan Aruch* 263:6 42 See *The Radiance of Shabbos*, p. 9, for further elaboration of these *halachos* 43 See *Kovetz Halachos*, Shabbos 1:7:55,56 44 See *Shulchan Aruch* 263:6. There are two ways to understand the ruling of the *Shulchan Aruch*. The *Biur Halacha* (*d"h* *bachurim*) understands that even a married man must light candles when he is away from home in order to promote peace and tranquility, and he must recite a *beracha* on the candles. The *Derech Chaim* (*seif* 14) rules that a married man does not recite the *beracha* over these candles that are lit. Rav Shmuel Kamenetzky (*Kovetz Halachos*, Shabbos 7:48, note 78) rules in accordance with the *Derech Chaim* (see also *The Radiance of Shabbos*, p. 10). Furthermore, although the *Mishna Berura* and *Aruch haShulchan* (263:5) rule that the husband should recite a *beracha*, *Elya Rabba* (263:15) sides with the opinion of the *Derech Chaim*. Moreover, since by the time Shabbos arrives there are lights already turned on (e.g., a bathroom or closet light), and already provide illumination, it is possible that there is no obligation to light a candle to promote peacefulness. See *Nishmas Shabbos* 1:391. 45 *Kovetz Halachos*, Shabbos 1:7:48 46 *Kovetz Halachos*, Shabbos 1:7:48. One does not recite a *beracha* when turning on the lights. 47 *Nishmas Shabbos* 1:393, based on *Tehilla l'David* (end of s"K 7)