

TORAH & HORAAH



Chayei Sarah 5778

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Dear Reader,

In this week's parashah we find how Efron wished to give Avraham the cave of Machpelah as a gift. The words with which Efron expressed this desire are striking (Bereishis 23:11): "No, my lord, hear me: I give you the field, and I give you the cave that is in it. In the presence of the sons of my people I give it to you; bury your dead."

In making his statement, Efron uses the expression "I give" no less than three times. The entire sentence, it would appear, could be stated simply by using the word "give" once: "I give you the field, and the cave in it – in the presence of the sons of my people." Why did Efron use the word "give" three times in place of once?

To understand the repetition of the word, it is important to distinguish between two types of gifts. One gift is the type given out of a sincere desire to give; the giver wishes to help

This week's article discusses questions of who should light Shabbos candles. Why is the principal obligation fulfilled by women? Can more than one member of the household light independent Shabbos candles? What should be done when a married daughter (or other guest) is staying with the family for Shabbos? And who lights the Shabbos candles when the mother is out of town—the father, or a daughter? These questions, among others, are discussed in this week's article.

This week's Q & A addresses the question of expelling a "nuisance student."

Who Lights the Shabbos Candles?

Toward the end of *Parashas Chayei Sarah* we find that Yitzchak brings Rivka to his mother's tent: "And Yitzchak brought her into the tent of his mother, Sarah, and he married Rivka and she became his wife, and he loved her, and Yitzchak was comforted after his mother's death" (*Bereishis 24:67*).

On the nature of the comfort that Yitzchak found in Rivka, Rashi comments (based on a Midrash) that Rivka took the place of Sarah: "For as long as Sarah was alive, a candle burned in her tent from one Shabbos eve to the next, her dough was blessed and a cloud hung over her tent. These blessings ceased upon Sarah's death, but resumed when Rivka entered the tent."

The blessing from the candles, it seems, was contingent upon the person lighting them: only Sarah, and later Rivka—the great women who established the households of the Avos—held the key to the blessing.

In the present article we will discuss who should light Shabbos candles. Why is the principle obligation fulfilled by women? Can more than one member of the household light Shabbos >>>

others, to empower others, to give of himself to others. The other, however, is the type that means only to create a debt of gratitude – to make the receiver obligated to the giver.

The second type of gift ensures that the receiver understands well that it is a gift, and the giver reiterates the point time and again. This was the way of Efron. And this was the reason why Avraham was so adamant not to receive the cave as a gift. Avraham could only be obligated to one authority. Receiving a gift – and certainly of the category that Efron offered – was out of the question.

Rabbeinu Bachya explains that the refusal of Avraham to receive the cave as a gift was an embodiment of the principle of “he who hates gifts shall live.” In accepting a gift, a person accepts, to some degree, a master upon himself. Avraham was unable to accept the offer.

In today’s atmosphere of “loving gifts,” of rights we think we deserve and have the right to demand, it is worth thinking twice: Do our demands match the Torah outlook? To what degree are we in line with the requirement to hate gifts?

May we merit, indeed, to be true disciples of Avraham Avinu.

candles? What should be done when a married daughter (or other guest) is staying with the family for Shabbos? And who lights the Shabbos candles when the mother is out of town—the father, or a daughter?

These questions, among others, are discussed below.

The Obligation of Women

The basic obligation of lighting Shabbos candles applies to the home. As the Shulchan Aruch rules (*Orach Chaim* 263:2, citing the Rambam): “Both men and women must ensure that a candle is lit in their house for Shabbos.” The obligation relates to the house (rather than to each person individually), and applies to the entire household, men and women alike. This means that all have a responsibility to ensure that Shabbos candles are lit in the home (see *Shulchan Aruch HaRav* 263, K.A. 5).

While the mitzvah of lighting Shabbos candles applies to all, the Shulchan Aruch (263:2) adds that the mitzvah falls primarily on women. The reason for this is that she is the “mistress of the house, and she manages the affairs of the home.”

The purpose of Shabbos candles is to ensure that there is light in the home. Since the obligation is that there should be light in the house, it follows that only one person needs to light. And like other matters of the home, the responsibility for this matter falls primarily on the woman.

The *Tur* (263) also notes that women are primarily obligated in the mitzvah, adding that it is fitting that women should kindle the light, “because she extinguished the light of the world, in causing the death of Adam.” Lighting the Shabbos candles is a partial penitence for the sin of Adam, which was initiated by his wife Chava.

When the lady of the house is unable to light the Shabbos candles (for instance if she is away for Shabbos, or out of the house at the time of lighting), another member of the household must do so. Moreover, the *Mishnah Berurah* writes that if the lady of the house is delayed in lighting the candles, and the time of *shekiya* (sunset) is fast approaching, her husband or one of the children should light the candles, rather than risk a violation of Shabbos.

Lighting Additional Candles

Since the obligation to light Shabbos candles relates to the

home, rather than to individual members of the household, there is room to consider whether two members of the same household can light Shabbos candles.

On the one hand, perhaps once one member of the household has lit the candles, the mitzvah has been fulfilled and there is therefore no mitzvah in lighting additional candles. This would mean that beracha cannot be recited over such an additional lighting, since it does not involve a mitzvah. On the other hand, it is possible that each person who lights a candle adds extra light to the home, and therefore adds to the fulfilment of the mitzvah. What is the halacha?

The basic discussion of this issue is concerning two distinct households dining together in the same place. Who can/should light Shabbos candles?

The Shulchan Aruch (263:8) rules as follows: “When two or three households are eating in a single place, some say that each makes a beracha over his own candelabra, but others are uncomfortable with this. Out of concern for an unwarranted beracha, it is therefore correct that only one should recite the beracha over the candles.” The Shulchan Aruch is thus undecided on the matter of whether more than one person can light candles in the same room, and rules that only one beracha should be recited.

The Rema, however, writes that “this is not our custom.” According to the Rema, both families can light candles with a beracha. As the *Magen Avraham* (15) and the *Mishnah Berurah* (35) explain, the reason for this is that one may recite a beracha over the extra light that each of the candles brings to the room.

What should two families do according to the Shulchan Aruch, when both women wish to light Shabbos candles? One option is that the

two families should light in different rooms. As the *Mishnah Berurah* (38) notes, if one of the families will be making use of another room, Shabbos candles may be lit in that room, aside from the candles lit in the dining room. Another option, noted by the *Aruch Hashulchan* (263:6), is for both women to light candles simultaneously. If one lighting does not (discernably) precede the other, both can light with a beracha.

Candles for Extra Rooms

This discussion relates to two households eating together. In addition, Poskim discuss whether a husband may light Shabbos candles in addition to his wife’s candles.

The *Mordechai* (*Shabbos Chap. 2*, no. 294) writes that somebody who is with his wife does not need to light in his own (separate) room and recite a beracha, because his wife recites a beracha on his behalf. The same statement is made by the Shulchan Aruch (263:6). It thus seems that all members of the household, including the husband, fulfill their mitzvah by means of the mother’s lighting.

However, there is a dispute among authorities concerning whether this ruling refers to the lighting of candles, or to the beracha. From the wording of the *Eliyahu Rabbah* (263:15), it appears that the husband is not even obligated to light in his personal chamber. If he wishes to do so, he should certainly not recite a beracha.

However, the *Magen Avraham* (14) and others (*Shulchan Aruch Ha-Rav* 9; *Mishnah Berurah* 31) maintain that there is a full obligation on the husband to light in his personal chamber, so that he will not stumble over items in that room. Nonetheless, a beracha should not be recited, since the mother of the home has already recited the beracha.

The *Biur Halachah* (6, s.v. *bachurim*) explains that this halacha corresponds to the concept of *bedikas chametz*: On the one hand, there is a mitzvah to check each and every room for *chametz*. Yet on the other, the checking of the entire house is considered one mitzvah, and only one beracha is recited over checking the entire house.

In the same sense, there is a mitzvah to light candles in every room that is in use to ensure that there is enough light in all the rooms. (If there is sufficient light without candles, there is no obligation to light). Yet, the lighting in each room does not constitute a distinct mitzvah. Rather lighting candles throughout the house is considered one mitzvah (see also *Shulchan Aruch HaRav*, K.A. 5).

Based on these rulings, it seems clear that once the mother has lit the Shabbos candles, no other member of the household may light additional candles with a beracha. Even the master of the house, lighting in a separate room, cannot do so. This will apply all the more so to a daughter lighting in the same room.

The *Ben Ish Chai* (*Shut Rav Pe'alim* 2:50) writes that a husband may light with a beracha if he does so before his wife. While this is not recorded by most authorities, the *Eshel Avraham* (263:6) mentions his doubt over the ruling, but states that he himself has the custom of lighting in other rooms before his wife lights, with a beracha.

As noted, however, this ruling is disputed. Furthermore, it is possible that the ruling only applies to the husband, who is master of the house, and who is therefore principally responsible for lighting candles. The *Bach* writes that the lady of the household in fact serves as an agent of the husband in lighting; the real obligation is his, but it is performed by the mother for the reasons

noted above (see also *Shulchan Aruch HaRav*, K.A. 2). It is therefore possible that the ruling applies to the husband alone, and not to other members of the household.

Halachic Rulings for Lighting in Separate Rooms

Based on the above, it seems that according to most authorities, lighting the Shabbos candles in a household is a single mitzvah, much like the mitzvah of searching for *chametz*. Therefore, when the mitzvah is fulfilled by the lighting of the mother, the remaining members of the household will no longer be able to light candles with a beracha.

Some authorities, based on the *Ben Ish Chai*, write that other members of the household may light in other rooms of the house (darkened rooms that are used on Shabbos), and a beracha may be recited if this is done before the mother's lighting. This ruling is given by *Nishmas Shabbos* (Vol. 1, p. 356) concerning lighting by a married couple in a separate room. A similar ruling is noted by *Shut Az Nidberu* (Vol. 6, no. 67-8), who writes that daughters of the same household may light with a beracha in separate rooms (acting as an agent for the father of the house).

On the other hand, the *Menuchas Ahava* (Chap. 4, no. 8, note 21) writes that even a child who has a room of his own should not light candles (in the room) with a beracha, for this is considered an unnecessary beracha (*beracha she'eina tzericha*) and therefore forbidden. He notes that this is the ruling given by Rabbi Ovadyah Yosef (*Yecheveh Daas* 2:32) and by others. *Shut Az Nidberu* (6:68) disputes this, and argues that the concept of an unnecessary beracha does not apply when different people are reciting different berachos.

The *Chesed Le'alafim* (263:6) rules that

although the father of the house may not recite a blessing over his own lighting (where the mother lights), other members of the household may make a beracha when lighting in their own rooms. The father and mother are a single unit, while other members of the household are considered independent entities.

The *Shulchan Aruch HaRav* (K.A. 5) justifies the custom of reciting a beracha on lighting candles in additional rooms, and explains that even concerning *bedikas chametz* it is possible that household members who did not hear the beracha from their father should recite their own beracha over checking individual rooms. This point is elaborated on in the aforementioned *Shut Az Nidberu*.

Mothers and Daughters

The above relates to lighting in separate rooms. What about lighting in the same room? May daughters light in the same room as their mother?

Based on the ruling of the Rema, whereby it is permitted (where two families eat in the same place) to recite a beracha over added light, it seems that if a daughter will be able to light candles with a beracha, provided she does so before her mother. This relies on the authorities above, who permit reciting a beracha on lighting in separate rooms. While recommending that they light in separate rooms, *Shut Az Nidberu* (6:68) thus justifies the custom of daughters lighting in the same room, before their mother lights.

Several authorities confirm that for certain locales this was the common custom in previous generations. The *Aruch Hashulchan* (263:7) writes that the custom is for daughters of Israel to light on their own, even if they are with their mother. He writes that the reason for this is that daughters, like women, are especially obligated in

the mitzvah, and that therefore each recites her own beracha.

Yet, the *Aruch Hashulchan* adds that each daughter should preferably light in a room of her own. Several Poskim point out the halachic difficulty for members of the same household to light in the same room (see, for instance, *Tehillah LeDavid* 263:7). Outside of Chabad, where the custom is for daughters to light with mothers, the common custom today is that unmarried daughters do not light together with their mother.

Even for families where the daughters do not customarily light Shabbos candles, it is common custom for married daughters (or daughters-in-law) staying for Shabbos with their parents to light alongside the mother. This custom is noted by the *Shemiras Shabbos Kehilchasah* (Chap. 43, no. 7) and by *Minchas Shabbos* (Chap. 75, no. 28).

Certainly, it is preferable to light in the bedroom designated for the married children, as ruled by *Maamar Mordechai* (263:6). Because there is an obligation (of *Shalom Bayis*) to have some light in the bedroom, it follows that this is the preferred option, as noted above (see *Minchas Shabbos* 75:28).

Fathers and Daughters

When the mother of the household is not present, who should light the Shabbos candles: the father of the household, or one of the daughters (single or married)?

As we saw above, there are specific reasons why women are given the honor of lighting Shabbos candles, and these possible apply even to daughters. However, we have also mentioned that the principal obligation of lighting candles rests on the father, and his wife lights on his behalf.

Will this apply even to daughters?

When both parents are away, Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach ruled that the eldest daughter in the home should light Shabbos candles (*Shemiras Shabbos*, Vol. 2, Chap. 45, note 34). The wording implies that this is only true when both parents are away; when the father is home, he should light the candles, rather than the eldest daughter.

A similar ruling emerges from the *Magen Avraham* (263:6), who writes that where the mother cannot light the candles (the reference is to the week of childbirth) the husband lights the candles (and recites the beracha) instead. This is likewise noted by other authorities (see *Mishnah Berurah* 11; *Tehilah LeDavid*; *Ben Ish Chai*, *Noach* 55), and the simple understanding is that the father will light even in the presence of daughters. A daughter, unlike a mother, is not the *akeres habayis*, the mainstay of the home, and she does not receive the special merit of lighting.

The question of preference between father and daughter is discussed explicitly by *Shut Be'er Moshe* (8:67), who concludes that the father should light, and not give his mitzvah to others.

The same position is cited by *Nishmas Shabbos* (1:263). Rav Nissim Karelitz *shlita* (*Chut Shani*, *Shabbos* Vol. 4, p. 63) also raises the question, noting the principal obligation of the father on the one hand, and the preference for women's lighting on the other. He leaves the question open.

Conclusion:

To summarize:

The basic responsibility for lighting Shabbos candles falls on the mother of the household, though in lighting she acts as an agent for her husband.

Every room in use must have sufficient light to avoid tripping on an object; in case of insufficient light from outside sources, candles must be lit in the room.

Where candles are lit in separate rooms, a beracha should be recited by the person lighting in the separate room.

The common custom (except for Chabad) is that members of the same household, such as mother and daughter, do not light in the same room, though some authorities justify the custom.

⌘ Halachic Responsa ⌘

to Questions that have been asked on our website dinonline.org



The Question:

What is the Halacha regarding the expulsion of a student deemed a “nuisance student”? Are there Halachic sources relating to this matter, and does it depend on the type of disturbance?



Answer:

There is no “general rule” for this matter, and each case must be dealt with individually.

However, as a general guideline, a student who is not taking school seriously or not succeeding in

studies should not be expelled, but if he is a bad influence on others or causes a serious disturbance then there is room to consider his expulsion.

Best wishes.



Sources:

The Gemara (Bava Basra 21a) already notes, as part of the enactments of Rabbi Yehoshua b. Gamla, that even if a child is not a great success in school, he should be left there nonetheless, since his presence is conducive to others' study.

This suggests that where his presence is not conducive to others, but rather disturbs others' study, there is room to expel the student. This observation is made by the Maharsha.

Rav Moshe Feinstein (Yoreh De'ah 3, no. 71) addresses such a question, and writes that a student should not be expelled for bad behavior alone, since perhaps he will better his ways and be influenced for the better by the positive school environment. Rav Moshe is aware of the hardship of keeping difficult children in class, but writes that this is part of the "melechtes kodesh" of a teacher.

The Chazon Ish (cited in Maaseh Ish, Vol. 1, p. 69) was asked about a boy caught stealing, and replied that "surely you have also spoken lashon hara, and yet were not expelled from the yeshiva... Surely a thief is not punishable by death!" The Chazon Ish's approach in general was that to expel a child is tantamount to "killing" him.

However, Rav Moshe writes that if the child is a spiritual and behavioral menace to others, then he should be expelled, "yet this matter must be weighed up carefully, since it is a matter of nefashos."

Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (Alehu Lo Yibol, Vol. 2, p. 337) also wrote that "where a student damages others, the yeshiva is responsible for them and must expel him, and if he is rude and insolent this will clearly be a negative influence on others." A similar statement was made by the Rebbe of Chabad (Iggros Kodesh, Vol. 14, p. 403).

The Chazon Ish took a different stance to the question, and wrote that "they think about the good of the many, what is in the benefit of the yeshiva. Indeed, sometimes the benefit of the congregation does not tally with that of the individual student. But in my eyes, each individual is an entire congregation" (Maaseh Ish, p. 63).

See thus Nesivos Yehoshua (Vol. 2, Introduction) who writes of how the Chazon Ish refused to expel a student even where he was damaging to others, and instructed the Rosh Yeshiva to "invest all of your energies to mend his ways and supervise his behavior" (see also Letter 81 of the Chazon Ish, who writes that "you cannot blame the mischievous children, for that is human nature, and you must make efforts in this area at all costs").

When the Chazon Ish did agree to expel a student, he instructed the Rosh Yeshiva to initiate a Chavrusa with the boy, and only then to expel him, while ensuring that the Chavrusa arrangement will continue (Maaseh Ish 1 p. 69). So great was the Chazon Ish's sensitivity and care for each student, that even when he conceded that the boy must be expelled, he ensured the blow was softened and the boy would remain in touch with the Rosh Yeshiva and with Torah study.