

HALOCHOSCOPE

Last week's and this week's question:

If a woman kindled *Shabbos* lights before *plag hamincha*, should she extinguish them and rekindle them after *plag hamincha*? Should her husband kindle additional lights?

The issues, last week:

A) *Ner Shabbos*

B) *Tosfos Shabbos*, bringing in *Shabbos* early

this week:

C) *Plag hamincha*

D) *Shelo yakdim*, how early may one make *Shabbos*

E) Extinguishing and rekindling; the *brocha*

C) *Plag hamincha*

Having explained that one should bring *Shabbos* in early, the question arises, how early? [In the next section we will discuss the basis for “too early”.] The concept is to add some of *Erev Shabbos* to *Shabbos*. By definition, the added time will be part of the daylight hours of Friday, rather than true *Shabbos*. The poskim debate the minimum *tosfos Shabbos*. Some say that one must conduct himself as though it is *Shabbos* from sunset. We might think this is obvious. It is the beginning of *bain hashmoshos*, twilight, and begins the *safek*, doubt, over the status of the time. Nonetheless, acting as though it is definitely *Shabbos* is more than acting as though it is doubtfully or possibly *Shabbos*. Others, however, maintain that one must add more time before sunset. Some recommend adding up to two hours, while others say that this is too much.

Similarly, when extending *Shabbos* after it ends, one is adding some of what is *halachically* Sunday. One cannot add the entire day. In terms of *tosfos Shabbos* after *Shabbos* the question is even more complicated. How does one add to *Shabbos* without verbalizing something? The simple answer is that *tosfos Shabbos* afterwards is a passive refrain from non-*Shabbos* activity. One should delay *maariv* or *havdalah*, though it seems from the poskim that even if one *davened maariv* early, and even recited *havdalah* early (while there was still some light, and minus the candle) he could still practice *tosfos Shabbos*. How long can it be stretched? *Havdalah*, *per se*, may be recited until Tuesday. This has more to do with the separate obligation to recite it on wine. *Maariv* is indeed delayed a little, but this is to promote *tosfos Shabbos*, rather than its manifestation.

On *Shabbos*, *retzai* is inserted in *bircas hamazon*, which includes words like 'this day of *Shabbos*'. Nonetheless, if one began his meal on *Shabbos*, he may say *retzai* after dark when he finishes. However, there comes a point when it is ridiculous to say these words. That point would be past the time of *tosfos Shabbos*.

The earliest source for a time seems to be that when three stars appear close to each

other. [Nightfall is measured by the appearance of three average sized stars. However, they need not be close to each other.] Some poskim maintain that just as for *Erev Shabbos* there is a minimum and one can add to it, so too on *Motzai Shabbos* one may do so. Others maintain that on *Motzai Shabbos* there is no overlapping time that could be attributed to the daytime, while on *Erev Shabbos* this exists – *plag hamincha*.

The Talmud mentions a time called *plag hamincha*. R Yehuda says that *mincha* may not be recited past *plag hamincha*. *Tefilos* were instituted modeled on the times for the *tamid* daily offerings. The afternoon offering could be offered until evening, according to the majority opinion. Therefore, *mincha* may be said until evening. R Yehuda says that it could not be offered past *plag hamincha*. *Mincha* may not be recited past this time.

R Yehuda gives the time for *plag hamincha* as 'eleven hours minus a quarter'. The day is divided into twelve equal parts, based on the hours of light. Some poskim say this is the hours of sunlight, and others use the hours of daylight. *Plag hamincha* occurs ten and three quarter hours into the day. The afternoon offering may be brought as soon as the sun is seen to be leaning westwards, a half-hour after astronomical noon. This is six and a half hours and is called *mincha gedolah*. The optimum time, also based on allowing for other offerings before it, is nine and a half hours, or *mincha ketanah*. At this time, the blood of the offering was thrown on the altar. *Plag hamincha* is halfway between this time and the end of the day. *Plag* is Aramaic for half.

Based on this, many maintain that there is a concept of part of the late afternoon belonging to the evening. The Talmud allows one to follow R Yehuda for *mincha*. Thus, we have a time by day, attributed to the following evening. The problem is that this time seems arbitrary. It has no astronomical significance, and does not seem to be mandated as a waiting period either. If so, how could it be used to invalidate a Scriptural offering?

R Yehuda does not consider *plag hamincha* nightfall. He himself has an opinion on *bain hashmoshos* [which is actually the accepted view]. Therefore, it is clear that the timing of *plag hamincha* is meant as a break-off time during the day. If so, it is not really an early time for nightfall. However, since it is used as an overlapping time period, some poskim use it to solve the *tosfos Shabbos* problem. Thus, they say that one could add to *Shabbos* as of *plag hamincha*, but not earlier than that.

However, in order to attribute *plag hamincha* to the evening, there must be some outside source. The commentaries and poskim struggle with this. Some suggestions are made, but none of them claim to be conclusive. The afternoon service included many parts. The actual offering was slaughtered, had its blood thrown, and had its parts burned, as well as other parts of it burned later. All of these could have taken place at staged intervals. Apart from these were the meal offering and libations that were also part of the process, but delayed after the main offering. Then came the *ketoress*, incense, and the kindling of the *menorah*. Some say that the *mincha*, meal offering, and the *nesachim*, libations, were offered right before *plag hamincha*. In the Navi reference is made to *alos hamincha*, time of this offering, as a two stage event. It is possible that the first was at *mincha ketana* and the second at *plag hamincha*, as the time period was split in two.

Some say that the *mincha* service corresponds to the *ketoress*, based on a verse. This was offered at a late point in the afternoon, which is called *bain ha'arbayim*. Thus the lat-

est time that may be called *bain ha'arbayim* is *plag hamincha*. The menorah was kindled after the *ketoress*. It is kindled by day, according to the Talmud and most commentaries. However, it is kindled at *erev*, late afternoon, and is not kindled *bain ha'arbayim*, 'between' afternoon. Thus, it is reasonable to say that it was kindled at *plag hamincha*, and that this was always the optimum time for it. If this was included in the oral instructions at Sinai, it would be a Scriptural basis for *plag hamincha*. It would also indicate that there is a time period that can be connected, though not attributed, to the later evening and night. [See references to section B. Melachim I:18:29 36, commentaries. Brochos 2a 26a-27a (Yerushalmi) Psachim 58a-59a, Poskim. Tur Sh Ar OC 188:10 233:1 261:1-3 263:4-5 293:1-3, commentaries. e.g. Minchas Kohen Mevo Hashemesh II:7. Shaagas Arye 17. Yisroel Vehazemanim 24:1 34:2.]

D) Shelo yakdim

The Talmud does not give an earliest time for *tosfos Shabbos*. In fact, though the Talmud does discuss *tosfos Shabbos*, not all poskim conclude that it applies. According to some, only *Yom Kippur* must be extended. Even this is not universally interpreted to apply to the sanctity of the day or to the prohibition of *melacha*. Some maintain that it applies only to the refraining from eating aspect. Furthermore, many do not apply *tosfos Shabbos* at all, even Rabbinically. Nonetheless, kindling *Shabbos* lights must take place before *Shabbos* begins, for obvious reasons. Therefore, they consider it a separate obligation on *Erev Shabbos*. It is done in honor of *Shabbos*, and must therefore be done close enough to be considered part of the preparation.

The Talmud does discuss timing the kindling. In one passage a sage told his wife not to kindle too late. When she wanted to kindle early, he told her not to do it early either. This source is not cited by all poskim. This leads some to suggest that not all agree with this conclusion. As we mentioned in section A, some suggest that the object is to have lights kindled. If they are already alight, one gains nothing by extinguishing them and rekindling. Furthermore, some suggest that this passage can only be reconciled with the view that *tosfos Shabbos* applies. The Talmud is saying that one may not add too much to *Shabbos*. Others maintain that the Talmud is simply saying that the time to kindle is strictly right before *Shabbos* begins, that is, before sunset. The simplest reading of this passage is that a definite time is not being suggested. If one wishes to, she may kindle early. However, while she might have intent to do it for *Shabbos*, if it will not be obvious to the onlooker, it is too early. According to this, *plag hamincha* is not the cutoff point. As long as people know that one is bringing in *Shabbos* early, one may kindle then.

Many poskim maintain that one cannot bring it in earlier than *plag*. Nonetheless, there was a widespread *minhag* to usher in *Shabbos* before *plag hamincha* on long summer days. This *minhag* is justified by some poskim. After offering the afternoon *tamid*, one could proceed to the evening offerings immediately. Accordingly, *maariv* could be recited then as well. Accordingly, the period could be connected to the night. The theory is that while one might not consider this part of the following day, one has certainly finished everything connected to this day. Therefore, one is free to usher in *Shabbos*.

This solves another dilemma. Some say that seasonal hours are divisions of daylight rather than sunlight. Depending on various opinions, *plag hamincha* could then be right

before sunset, or according to some even after it. How would this view fulfill *tosfos Shabbos*? If one may add time even before *plag*, this is resolved.

In practice, the prevailing view is that one must at the minimum accept *Shabbos* at sunset. One may add more time, up to *plag hamincha*. There is a question whether this counts Scripturally or Rabbinically. If one added prior to this, it does not count. [See *Shabbos* 23b, Poskim. *Terumas Hadeshen* 1. *Tur Sh Ar OC* 263:4-5, commentaries.]

E) Extinguishing and rekindling; the brocha

Our question is how forceful is this cutoff time? If the woman kindled her candles too early, it is as though she lit regular candles. She did not fulfill her specific obligation of *Shabbos* lights, and should kindle fresh candles for *Shabbos*. She should even recite a *brocha*. If it is as though she accepted *Shabbos* early, she is forbidden to kindle fresh lights. If it is in any way a *safek*, doubt, she may not rekindle, and she may certainly not recite a *brocha* in doubt. Furthermore, if there is indeed a doubt, we might require someone in the household who did not yet accept *Shabbos* to kindle special lights. This way the woman can say that if she did not fulfill her obligation early, she will count the other person as her delegated agent. However, due to the doubt, no *brocha* may be recited.

Some poskim cite an opinion that if a woman kindled early she must extinguish the light and rekindle, even reciting a *brocha*. However, some say that this is not universally agreed. It is based on a suggestion that 'maybe' having the lights alight is insufficient, but they must be intentionally kindled. Furthermore, it might refer to a woman who kindled them without a *brocha*, intending to recite the *brocha* later. This is anyhow the common practice of women, whose *brocha* would be considered accepting *Shabbos*. They kindle them, try to avoid benefiting from them, and recite a *brocha* afterwards. Therefore, they say it is not recommended that the same woman extinguish them and rekindle them. We have also shown that certain communities considered it *Shabbos* before *plag hamincha*. [See *Sh Ar OC* 263:4 *MA* 6 *RAE BHL*, commentaries. *ShuT Nachalas Shiva* 8. *Minchas Kohain* II:1. *Eretz Tzvi* 113. *Minchas Yitzchok* IV:53:esp. 22. *Yabi Omer* II:OC:17.]

In conclusion, due to the controversy, she should not extinguish the lights. Someone else who has not accepted *Shabbos* may kindle an additional light, with her in mind. He should express clearly that it is *lichvod Shabbos*. He should not recite a *brocha*.

On the Parsha ... *My Shabossos you shall observe [tishmoru] .. [26:2] Shmira is mentioned before and after Shabbos in the Torah. This refers to tosfos Shabbos before and after it. [Baal Haturim]* Why is the term *shmirah* used to denote *tosfos Shabbos*? This sounds more like taking extra care not to encroach on the *zman*, to avoid desecrating it, rather than positively extending and enhancing it! Perhaps *shmira* here does not mean to watch or stand guard. It could mean to wait for an event to happen [see *Vayeshev* 37:11]. One should be prepared early and await the advent of *Shabbos* by adding *tosfos Shabbos*. One should also wait after *Shabbos* before rushing back to weekday activity.

Sponsored by Frank Lieberman and Beverly Barkon in memory of Frank's mother, Sheva bas

Baruch a"h, whose *yahrzeit* is on the 26th of Iyyar. ם

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