



Parshas Yisro 5765

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Is it permissible to set a timer on the irrigation system in my garden?

We learned in the previous shiur that according to the *Rama* one may not begin an operation before Shabbos that will continue into Shabbos if it is something that people are liable to say that one began it on Shabbos. The example in the *halacha* of such an operation is a flour mill.¹

The question is whether an irrigation system is similar to a mill. The *Mechaber* says² that one may turn on the irrigation system before Shabbos and allow it to continue watering on Shabbos, but the *Mechaber* is of the opinion that one may operate the mill before Shabbos as well.

It appears that it would depend on the type of system. According to the stringent opinion, if it is a sprinkler system, which is easily seen or heard by passersby in the street, it would be prohibited. If it is the type that cannot be heard or seen, it would be permitted.

What are the reasons for lighting candles for Shabbos?

Chazal ruled that candles must be lit on Shabbos for two reasons, *oneg Shabbos* and *k'vod Shabbos*.

Oneg Shabbos – to enjoy the Shabbos. We learn from the prophets that one must enjoy Shabbos, as it says וקראת לשבת ענג, and if the house is dark on Shabbos, one cannot enjoy the Shabbos.

Chazal also say that one can easily trip over something in the dark, which might disrupt the Shabbos harmony and to prevent this situation, *Chazal* wanted us to illuminate our homes and enjoy the Shabbos.

K'vod Shabbos – to honor the Shabbos by lighting candles. It is common practice to turn on many lights to honor distinguished guests. Therefore to show how we honor and respect the Shabbos queen, *Chazal* wanted us to light candles in her honor.

Is there a practical difference between the two reasons?

There are several differences. For example, we could say that even though electric lights brighten our homes, we must still light **candles** in order to **honor** the Shabbos.³ (This is not to say that electric lights cannot be used in lieu of candles, it is an issue which we will *be"H* deal with later, but the candles are noticeable that they were lit to honor the Shabbos) but if it were only for the sake of *oneg Shabbos*, it would suffice that the house is illuminated on Shabbos.

Another difference might be that if one has candles lit before Shabbos for some other reason and Shabbos arrives, if it were for *oneg Shabbos* one could leave them as they are, but for the sake of *k'vod Shabbos*, one would need to extinguish the candles and light them in order to honor the Shabbos.⁴

Where should the main location of lighting be?

¹ *Rama* in *simon* 252:5.

² *Simon* 252:5.

³ See *SS"K* 43 footnote 171.

⁴ See the *Rama* 263:4.

The main position for lighting candles is adjacent to one's meal, as this includes *oneg Shabbos* – to enjoy one's meal, and *k'vod Shabbos* – to honor the Shabbos during one's meal.⁵ The *b'racha* for lighting should be made over the candles near one's table, but one must make sure that one's house is lit to the extent that one can see into the bedrooms etc. and not trip over items lying on the floor. One need not turn on the lights in the bedrooms, it is sufficient to turn on the electric lights in the corridor if that light shines into the bedrooms.

If one is sleeping at home but not eating at home, may one still make a b'racha over the candles lit at home?

Not only may one make a *b'racha*, one **must** make a *b'racha*,⁶ because candles are lit even if one is not eating at home. We will learn *be"H* the *halachos* pertaining to the lighting of candles when eating out or sleeping out.

How many candles should one light?

Chazal instituted the obligation to light one candle, but common custom is to light at least two candles, one for *zachor* and one for *shamor*. There are many customs prevalent as to the number of candles one lights for Shabbos and one should accept the custom "*b'li neder*" – without the obligation of an oath, in the event that one will not be able to light the number one is accustomed to. Many women add candles according to the amount of children, but when eating out the custom is to light only the two candles.⁷

What happens if one forgot to light Shabbos candles?

43 footnote 6.

⁶ *M"B* simon 263:29.

⁷ See the *SS"K* 43:3.

One should add another candle from then on, i.e. if one normally lights two candles, in the future one should light three candles. This is a type of penalty for having forgotten to light the candles.⁸ There are many ramifications to this *halacha*, such as, what if lights are on in the house and the house is not dark, but the candles were not lit. In such an instance one must ask a *rav* for halachic guidance. If one forgot to light the number of candles one usually lights, e.g. usually two are lit, and by mistake only one candle is lit, one need not add a candle from then on.⁹

Vort on the Parsha

The *possuk* says – לבעבור נסות אתכם. The word *נסות* has two meanings – נסיון a trial, and נס be raised. We often think that trials and tribulations are stumbling blocks and they are a major interference in our lives, when the Torah tells us just the opposite, the trials are there in order to raise us to higher levels.

Food For Thought

Which are preferred, regular candles or olive oil?

Must one light candles if one is going out and there is a danger of fire, or a smoke alarm going off?

Why is it customary that the women light the Shabbos candles?

Answers coming *be"H* next week.

⁸ *Simon* 263:1.

⁹ *Bi'ur Halacha* *simon* 263:1 "ששכחה".

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Note: The purpose of this series is intended solely for the clarification of the topics discussed and not to render halachic decisions. It is intended to heighten everyone's awareness of important practical questions which do arise on this topic. One must consult with a proper halachic authority in order to receive p'sak.