



Parshas Shoftim 5766

August 25, '06  
Volume V Issue 35

### Hilchos Yom Tov (cont.)

*Is there a limit to the amount of candles one may light on Yom Tov?*

In days of old, the more light in one's home the merrier, consequently there would be no limit as to the amount of candles one may light on Yom Tov. Nowadays candles are not used (in most places) for light and candlelight seems superfluous. If however candlelight has some use, whether to heat food or for aesthetic reasons or if it enhances one's Yom Tov, or for the sake of a mitzvah, for example, one who normally lights candles according to the number of children etc, it is permitted.<sup>1</sup>

*Should one light Yom Tov candles before Yom Tov?*

Some say that since candlelight is not needed for light one should light Yom Tov candles before Yom Tov. When Yom Tov falls on a Friday it is problematic to light Shabbos candles when electric lights are blazing,<sup>2</sup> or in *chutץ la'aretz* on the second night.

The answer is that candlelight adds to the ambience and festivity of Yom Tov and without candlelight the meal is not the same. Dining on Yom Tov night without candles is not the same as with candles, even though they are not needed for light. Accordingly one may light candles on

Friday Yom Tov for Shabbos; on Yom Tov night and on second night Yom Tov.

*Is it permitted to light candles in shul?*

Many are accustomed to light candles in shul on the *chazzan's* podium even though it is not for light (during the day etc.) and it is permitted on Yom Tov as well.<sup>3</sup> The same with lighting candles at a *b'ris milah*, even though it is not for light.<sup>4</sup>

*May one light a ner neshama (yohrtzeit candle) on Yom Tov?*

A candle lit on *yohrtzeit* must be lit before Yom Tov as benefiting from the light is not the purpose. If however, one forgot to light the *yohrtzeit* candle, one should light in the dining room thereby deriving benefit from the candlelight or even better it should be lit in shul.<sup>5</sup> The *Bi'ur Halacha* concludes that in time of need it is possible that one may light it because it is associated with a mitzvah – in honor of one's parents.<sup>6</sup>

*May one smoke on Yom Tov?*

Much has been written on the subject, so we will just present the basics.<sup>7</sup>

The stringent opinion bases himself on a *halacha* in *Shulchan Aruch*<sup>8</sup> that says the following: one may not burn incense on coals on Yom Tov,

<sup>1</sup> SS"K 13:4.

<sup>2</sup> Shabbos candles are normally lit on Yom Tov close to Shabbos. According to the above because of the blazing electric lights one does not "enjoy" the light emitting from the candles, thereby presenting a lack of reason for lighting them.

<sup>3</sup> Simon 514:5 and M"B 31.

<sup>4</sup> M"B simon 514:30, SS"K 13:6.

<sup>5</sup> Bi'ur Halacha simon 514:5 ד"ה נר.

<sup>6</sup> See SS"K 13:6.

<sup>7</sup> See Bi'ur Halacha simon 511:4 ד"ה אין.

<sup>8</sup> Simon 511:4.

whether to smell or to add fragrance to the house or clothes. The *chidush* (innovation) of this *se'if* is that even though one derives direct benefit from incense on Yom Tov, it is not **שוה לכל נפש** – (not performed by the majority of the populace).

A major *halacha* pertaining to *melachos* on Yom Tov says that a *melacha* is permitted only when the majority of the populace are accustomed to it - **דבר השוה לכל נפש**, but something that only finicky or the nobility do is prohibited. Only aristocrats burn incense and therefore it is prohibited on Yom Tov.<sup>9</sup>

Consequently, the majority of the populace do not smoke thereby rendering smoking something is not **שוה לכל נפש**. The *Bi'ur Halacha* states that the stringent opinion includes other problematic issues.

The lenient opinion (at the time of the *Mishna Berura* it was the majority opinion) holds either because many people smoke, making it **שוה לכל נפש**, or because those who unfortunately smoke suffer without it.

Nowadays, many *poskim* agree that smoking is prohibited on Yom Tov because of the health risk involved and the enormous decline in smoking habits throughout the world – making it not **שוה לכל נפש**.

### **May one burn chometz found on Yom Tov Pesach?**

It would appear to be a great mitzvah of burning *chometz*, however the *halacha* is to the contrary. The *Shulchan Aruch* writes<sup>10</sup> that one who finds *chometz* on Yom Tov must cover it. It may not be handled on account of *muktzeh*, nor may it be burned (even without handling it), because it is not a fire necessary on Yom Tov, as one can dispose of the *chometz* without burning it.<sup>11</sup> The *Mishna Berura*<sup>12</sup> however cites *poskim* who are of the opinion that one who did not annul his *chometz* may discard it and some even hold that it may be burned, based on the law of **מתוך**

– meaning since burning is permitted when necessary, it is permitted even when not necessary, (notice that even they do not say that it is called needed).

He concludes that most *poskim* agree that *halacha* is like the *Shulchan Aruch*.<sup>13</sup>

---

## **Vort on the Parsha**

The possuk says and you will eradicate (the spillover of) innocent blood when you do the right thing in the eyes of *Hashem* (21:9). The Ibn Ezra explains that it is based on the concept of “the reward of a mitzvah is a mitzvah”. Rav Sternbuch understands that the Ibn Ezra means to say that as a result of correct conduct there will be no murders in your land. It is not a spiritual reward rather a result of correct education and implication of *Hashem's* laws that leads to a utopian world.

Rav Moshe adds that we see that a proper Torah observant life leads to harmony and happiness.

---

## **Food for Thought**

*May one extinguish fire on Yom Tov?*

*Does it make a difference if my food is burning?*

*May one lower the heat of an electric oven?*

*May one cause water to overflow and extinguish a fire?*

Answers coming be"H next week.

---

<sup>9</sup> See *M"b* *simon* 511:21.

<sup>10</sup> *Simon* 446:1.

<sup>11</sup> *Shulchan Aruch HaRav* *simon* 446:6.

<sup>12</sup> *Simon* 446:6.

---

<sup>13</sup> He adds that places that burn real *chometz* found on Yom Tov should continue with their custom.

One may receive and distribute these weekly shiurim by calling or writing: Office 99 Rechov Bayit Vegan, Yerushalayim, Phone Numbers: U.S. and Canada 732-370-3344 Israel 972-3-616-6340 South Africa 078 1655 242 UK 44-020-8731-6666 Australia 61-296835626 Switzerland 0114143 333 0288 • e-mail: [shabbosweekly@shemayisrael.com](mailto:shabbosweekly@shemayisrael.com), or [www.shemayisrael.com](http://www.shemayisrael.com), weekly sponsorships are available as well.

If you would like to send a question to Rav Ostroff, you can write to him at [shabbosweekly@shemayisrael.com](mailto:shabbosweekly@shemayisrael.com).

**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.