

# THE SHABBOS WEEKLY

## HALACHA SERIES ON HILCHOS SHABBOS

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*If the father of the house accepts Shabbos early, are the members of the household required to follow suit?*

We must preface this *halacha* with several *halachos* that are pertinent to this rule. A person who accepts Shabbos before sunset may not perform any *melachos*.<sup>1</sup> This is true even if the majority of the people in town have not yet accepted Shabbos.

It is possible to accept Shabbos either by davening the Shabbos *Ma'ariv* (evening prayer), or by saying “*מזמור Shir liyom hashava*” or “*בואי בשלום*”, or even by saying “I accept the *Shabbos kodesh* upon myself”.

We also find that when the majority of the members of a shul are in shul and have accepted Shabbos, the minority automatically follow suit and it is Shabbos for them as well. This generally applies to a small town or village that has only one shul, but in certain cases it can apply to a town with a few shuls as well, where the majority of the shuls have already accepted Shabbos. (These laws are complicated and we will not deal with them in this forum).<sup>2</sup>

*What does the above have to do with a father of a household and his family?*

HaRav Moshe Feinstein *ztz”l* writes<sup>3</sup> that if the reason the husband accepts the Shabbos early<sup>4</sup> is in order to add hours to the

Shabbos (for the sake of *Tosefes Shabbos*) or in order to prevent performing *melachos* on Shabbos and it is something he does on a permanent basis, the wife and household would have to follow suit. This is based on the *halacha* that the wife follows the husband's customs.

However, in the majority of cases, when the husband accepts Shabbos ahead of candle lighting, in order to have the Shabbos meal early, so as to enable the children to partake of the meal, or in order to eat at the same time he eats during the week, his wife and family do not follow suit and do not have to accept Shabbos with his doing so.<sup>5</sup>

*An interesting case arises where a woman forgot to recite the b'racha over the candles due to the Shabbos rush. She would like to know if she may recite the b'racha long after she had lit the candles.*

Initially we would probably say no, as the *b'racha* is usually recited before the *mitzvah*, or at least as close as possible to the *mitzvah*. However, we find<sup>6</sup> that in the event that one has not made the *birkas al netilas yadayim*, after washing hands for a meal, one may make it up until one has made the *birkas hamotzi*.<sup>7</sup> One of the reasons is because the purpose of the washing is to have “clean” hands for the partaking of food and

<sup>1</sup> *Simon* 263:11, and *SS”K* 46:14.

<sup>2</sup> These *halachos* can be found in *simon* 263:12, 15 and *SS”K* 46:7, 15.

<sup>3</sup> *Iggros Moshe Orach Chaim* vol. III *simon* 38.

<sup>4</sup> Although Rav Moshe is referring to a case where the husband davening in a shul that accepts Shabbos

early and not that he accepted Shabbos on his own, but it seems that it would have the same *din*.

<sup>5</sup> See also the *SS”K* 46 footnote 42 and 68.

<sup>6</sup> *Simon* 158:11 and *M”B* 44.

<sup>7</sup> The *Bi’ur Halacha* “*mevarech*” says that there are times when one may recite the *b'racha* after *hamotzi* as well.

therefore the *b'racha* will apply itself to that very state after the washing as well. We can therefore apply the same logic here and say that as long as the candles are alight one is “performing” the mitzvah of having candles lit for Shabbos and as such the *b'racha* is just as pertinent. However, since words of the *b'racha* are “*lehadlik*” – to light, and it is prohibited to light candles on Shabbos, one may not recite the *b'racha* in a time when one may not light. To summarize: one may recite the *b'racha* after lighting but only until sunset.<sup>8</sup>

*If the candles went out after being lit but before the b'racha, may she relight them?*

The problem is that the woman accepts Shabbos as soon as she has finished lighting the candles and therefore if the candles became extinguished she may not relight them. In such a case she may ask another member of the household to relight them (provided of course that it is not yet Shabbos).<sup>9</sup> If however, the candles became extinguished before she managed to recite the *b'racha*, HaRav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach *ztz"l* holds<sup>10</sup> that she herself may relight the candles and recite the *b'racha*. Even though we normally say that she accepts the Shabbos with the lighting, in this case the acceptance is void because had she known that the candles would become extinguished she would not have accepted Shabbos. As such, she may relight the candles and recite the *b'racha*.

*If a gentile lit the candles for me after sh'kiah – sunset, may I recite the b'racha?*

Obviously one must do everything to light Shabbos candles on time. However, if for some reason one was not able to light

<sup>8</sup> Based on the *Bi'ur Halacha* in *simon* 263:5 “כשיידליך”.

<sup>9</sup> *SS"K* 43:37.

<sup>10</sup> See *SS"K* 43:37 and footnote 183.

Shabbos candles, one may instruct a gentile to light the candles during *bein hashmashos* – twilight, as long as it is not yet night, but one may not recite a *b'racha*.

The reason one is permitted to instruct the gentile is because one may instruct a gentile to do a melacha during *bein hashmashos* for the sake of a mitzvah.<sup>11</sup>

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### Vort on the Parsha

The *Midrash* says that *Hashem* took a half coin of fire from beneath His Seat of Glory and showed it Moshe Rabeinu saying, this is what each person must give.

The *Michtav Sofer* explains that the reason *Hashem* took a coin of fire from beneath His *Kiseh HaKavod* was to demonstrate that a Jew's soul has another half, and it is beneath *Hashem's Kiseh HaKavod*. A Jew must try his best throughout his lifetime to complete the other half of the coin, match it and bring it to the same level as the one beneath *Hashem's Kiseh*. This is a lifetime's work.

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### Food For Thought

*Is one supposed to accept Shabbos before sunset?*

*If I accepted Shabbos before sunset, may I instruct a fellow Jew to perform a melacha?*

*What am I to do if I need to do a melacha and I have already accepted Shabbos?*

*If I accepted Shabbos and I then remembered that I have not yet davened mincha, what is the halacha?*

Answers coming be" H next week.

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<sup>11</sup> See *M"B* *simon* 263:21, and *SS"K* 43:14.

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Dedicated L'ilui nishmas Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach *z"l*, 20<sup>th</sup> Adar I.

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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*.