

Stories, Biographies & Wonders

**Baal HaTurim**

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The 12th of Tamuz marks the Yahrzeit of Rabbeinu Yaakov ben Asher, the Baal Haturim (1270-1341). The Baal Haturim was the son of Rabbeinu Asher (the Ro"Sh). His monumental halachic work, the Arba'ah Turim served as a basis for the Shulchan Aruch. The many commentaries on the Tur include those of Rav Yosef Karo (the Beis Yosef), Rav Moshe Isserles (Darkei Moshe), Rav Yoel Sirkes (the Beis Chadash), Rav Yehoshua Falk (Derishah uPerishah), and Rav Yosef Escapa (the Rosh Yosef).



The Chid"ra claimed that without proper study of the Tur and its commentaries, one cannot begin to determine halachah. Rav Yaakov also authored Sefer HaRemazim (also known as Kitzur Piskei HaRosh), an abridged version of his father's compendium of the Talmud.

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Menucha

A Shabbos table companion for the whole family

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Halacha Challenge

**Pre-charring the Wicks**



Abba went away on a trip for two weeks. Before he left, he appointed his older son Binyomin to prepare Imma's Shabbos candles on erev Shabbos.

When erev Shabbos arrived and Binyomin was setting up the candles, he said to his brothers Kalman, Levi and Shmuli: "I think when Abba prepares the candles he lights the wicks and puts them out. But I am not certain about it."

"I don't think Abba does that. Doing that can ruin the wicks! So don't do it, Binyomin," said Kalman. His brother Levi objected: "I saw in a few houses that they do that. It must be a minhag Yisroel. So I think you must do that!" Everyone turned to Shmuli to see what he has to say. "I think doing that ruins some types of wick. But I also think that some types of wicks benefit from making them charred. So try with one candle. Light it, put it out and then see if you can easily re-light it. If it re-lights easily, then singe the other candles."

Q. Whose advice is the best one – Kalman's, Levi's or Shmuli's.

DEDICATIONS

Special thanks to kehillas **Beis Tefillah Yonah Avraham**



ANSWER\*: Shmuli's.

EXPLANATION: The question of singing the wicks of the Shabbos candles is discussed in Mishnayos of the perek Bameh Madlikin (the perek of Mishnayos that many communities read after Kabbalas Shabbos). The Mishna says: פתילת הבגד שקפלה ולא הבהבה - רבי אליעזר אומר: "טמאה ואין מדליקין בה." רבי עקיבא אומר: "טהורה ומדליקין בה"

*A wick [made from a] garment that [a person] folded but did not singe: R' Eliezer says: It is impure (i.e., it is susceptible to tumah) and we may not light [a Shabbos candle] with it. R' Akiva says: It is pure (i.e., it is not susceptible to tumah) and we may light [a Shabbos candle] with it.*

The word להבהב of the Mishna is a very uncommon word. The Rishonim explain that this word means to burn the wick slightly by lighting it up and then putting it out (see the commentary of the Rosh ch.2 § 18). Chazal (Shabbos 29a) tell us that, in reality, R' Eliezer's requirement to singe wicks of the Shabbos candles applies to all wicks – not just the ones made from garments. R' Eliezer holds that only charred wicks should be used for Shabbos candles. Rashi explains that charred wicks burn well – i.e., a charred wick holds fire better than a wick which is not charred. Rabbi Akiva of our mishna does not make this a requirement (i.e., though he agrees with R' Eliezer that charred wicks burn better, it's not necessary to create charred wick for the Shabbos candles.)

Who does the halacha follow in this mishna – R' Eliezer or R' Akiva? Almost all of the Rishonim teach that the halacha follows R' Akiva here (see Tosafos 29a for the reasons). Hence, the Shulchan Aruch (OC 264:9) rules that it is not required to singe the wicks of the Shabbos candles. Having said that, already from the time of the Rishonim we see that there was a minhag to singe the wicks. The Rosh (ibid.) says it's a nice minhag. As such, in the Shulchan Aruch, the Rama (OC 264:9) brings down this minhag. [Besides this, the Piskei Teshuvos (263 §13) writes that according to kabalistic sources, a person achieves certain spiritual tikunim when he prepares the Shabbos candles by pre-lighting and distinguishing the wicks (see note 124 of the Piskei Teshuvos to see which specific tikunim are achieved through this. It appears that those tikunim are applicable specifically to the men).]

Nowadays, however, there are many types of wicks that will be degraded if pre-charred. Thus, a person needs to make sure (i.e., by testing one wick) that his wicks will not become worse if he will singe them (Piskei Teshuvos ibid.).

It is also important to mention the following words of the Chayei Adam (Shabbos 5 § 21): "On erev Shabbos, it is proper to pre-light [the wicks] and to put [them] out so that it will be easier to light [them]. And the man [of the household] should do this." Thus, what Chayei Adam is teaching us that lighting and putting out the wicks has another benefit (besides the benefit of increasing their quality): Once the time will arrive to light them for Shabbos, it will be easy to start their flames.

\* Note: Menucha's answer is for Torah learning purposes only and not as a halachic ruling.

## Kids Ask, Zeidy Answers



Zeidy, since we are Hashem's children and He is the king of the world, why do bad things happen sometimes?



You're asking a good question, kids - since Hashem's love for us is eternal\* and nothing happens in the world without Hashem's will, why do "bad" things happen to us sometimes? The Derech Hashem says that "bad" things happen to the Jewish people **only** due to Hashem's goodness, and these things come upon us due to the following two reasons: (A) Hashem is waking us up to do Teshuva or/and (B) Hashem is cleaning us from our *aveiros*.

\*[Midrash Tanna D'vei Eliyahu ch.6]

## Riddles



Reuven and Shimon are twins. They ate a small meal on a Shabbos afternoon. Reuven said to Shimon: "That's funny; we ate absolutely the same amount of food. We're twins even here!" Their father gave each one a bencher and said: "Now it is time to thank Hashem for the food." When they were finished, their father asked them: "Did you mention Shabbos?" "Oops, we forgot," they said. Their father turned to Reuven and said: "You need to repeat." Then, he turned to Shimon and said: "You don't need to repeat." Reuven and Shimon are equally healthy and strong (physically and mentally). *Why did the father tell to Reuven to repeat and to Shimon he said not to repeat?*

**Last week's Riddle:** I am so similar to *Parah Aduma*. *Parah Aduma* was an animal that was used for the communal *avodah*. Me too. *Parah Aduma* was brought to Yerushalayim. Me too. *Parah Aduma* was killed outside of the Beis HaMikdash. Me too. *Parah Aduma* was bought with the money of Trumas HaLishka. Me too. *What am I?*

**Answer :** The goat that was sent to *Azazel* on Yom Kippur. Both *Parah Aduma* and the goat that was sent to *Azazel* were used for the communal *avodah* (in Yerushalayim). Both were "killed" outside of the Beis HaMikdash. The Mishna in Shekalim (4:2) teaches that both *Parah Aduma* and the goat that was sent to *Azazel* were bought with communal funds (*shekalim* of Trumas HaLishka).