

**O.C. *siman* 680 : Placing Candles Close to the Entrance (the night of Shabbos)**

*Note that the order of the se'ifim is reversed.*

**The development of: *Se'if* 2**

## SETTING UP THE SHABBOS CHANUKAH CANDLES "ATTACHED TO THE DOOR ITSELF"

By way of introduction: As an application of the general concept of "indirectly causing a fire to go out" on Shabbos, the Gemara (*Shabbos* 120b<sup>1</sup>) concludes that if a "candle"<sup>1</sup> is placed somewhere called "at the back of the door", then it's *assur* to open that door<sup>2</sup>. In the Halachos of Shabbos (O.C. 277:1), the *Beis Yosef* brings the three fundamentally different explanations of "at the back of the door", and the ruling there is that we consider it *assur* all three ways, because we cannot clearly choose one explanation to adopt. One of the three interpretations is Tosafos's, that the candle is *attached to the door*, as the Tosafos explains:

*As a result of opening or closing the door, the "candle" shakes, and the oil is distanced from the flame - or brought closer to it, and that's considered a melacha\* accomplishment of "putting out" a fire - or "causing to burn". (On the other hand, if it were not for this concern for "putting out" and "causing to burn", it would **not** be assur because of moving the "candle" [which is "muktzeh" - see "Principles"], because the person's closing the door is not considered an act of "moving".<sup>3</sup>)*

Knowing this, let's see what the Tur<sup>o</sup> here writes about applying it in practice on Chanukah:

*"HaRav R' Shmuel"<sup>4</sup> did not have a place behind the door to light Chanukah "candles", and he would attach them to the door itself (behind the door). He explained: One cannot say that when he opens or closes the door, he leans the oil or the wax toward the wick - or distances them from the wick - and consequently he's "putting out" a fire or "causing to burn"; for after all, the Gemara (ibid.) says that one may tilt the surface on which a "candle" is standing such that the "candle" will fall, so we see that one does not have to be concerned about leaning the oil forward or backward. [The **reason** this is not a concern is that] in such a fashion "putting out" or "causing to burn" is not relevant [at all], and even if it is relevant -*

<sup>1</sup> The word "*ner*" is traditionally translated "candle", but the earlier sources generally do not use the word to refer to solid candles. Rashi explains that in the days of the Gemara, earthenware "lamps" were used; his full description is brought above (671:3).

<sup>2</sup> The Gemara first brings a Baraisa which says it's *muttar*, and then that Rav "laid a curse on that". The *Beis Yosef* (O.C. 277) cites the major authorities as ruling like Rav.

<sup>3</sup> The Tosafos adds that "it's also not a case where the door becomes a 'support for something *assur* [to be moved]' [i.e. a '*bassis*']." [The Tosafos then gives examples of why, in fact, the door would not be in that category of "*muktzeh*", but those are beyond the scope of this volume.]

<sup>4</sup> The report of this position is brought by the Tur as coming from the Maharam<sup>o</sup> (of Rottenburg), and by the *Beis Yosef* (O.C. 277) as coming from the *Hagahos Maimonios*<sup>o</sup>. [The *Beis Yosef* there seems to accept the analysis which the Tur writes here.]

"something which one does not intend" is *muttar*<sup>5</sup>, and it's not a "*p'sik reisha*" [literally: a case of "cutting off the head"<sup>6</sup>].

**On the other hand, the Tur makes clear:** According to Tosafos<sup>7</sup>, that's *assur*! (As for that case of "tilting the surface on which a 'candle' is standing," the Tosafos interprets it to be referring only to a case where there is no oil in the "candle"; for the Tosafos **does** consider it a "*p'sik reisha*" [literally: a case of "cutting off the head"] if there **is** oil in it.)

The *Shulchan Aruch* rules "anonymously" like Tosafos: **On the eve of the Shabbos, it is *assur* to attach the "candles" to the door itself (behind the door); and there is someone who holds it is *muttar*.** The *Rema* adds: [To clarify this,] see above *siman 276 se'if 1*. (The *Mishnah Berurah* explains that he is referring to the fact that over there, no lenient position is even mentioned; i.e. the Halacha is that it's *assur*.)

The *Sha'ar HaTziyun* refers to the Halachos of Shabbos (277:1), where it is explicitly ruled that the problem only applies by oil and the like, *not* by wax candles.

The *Gra* interprets the lenient position mentioned by the *Shulchan Aruch* as being that of the *Sefer Ha'Aruch*<sup>8</sup>, who holds that a "*p'sik reisha*" is only *assur* when it's "desired".<sup>8</sup> The *Sha'ar HaTziyun* notes that this way too, the Halacha will not be like that, because the position of the *Sefer Ha'Aruch* is rejected (in the Halachos of Shabbos, O.C. 320:18).

### The development of: **Se'if 1**

#### MAKING SURE THAT THE SHABBOS CHANUKAH CANDLES WILL NOT BE PUT OUT WHEN THE DOOR IS OPENED

The Tur writes: "For the night of Shabbos, one has to place something [in such a way as] to be a barrier between the 'candles'<sup>9</sup> and the entrance, because of the wind - [i.e.] so it will not put out the 'candles' when he opens the door; for [when] a 'candle' [is] 'at the back of the door' - it's *assur* to open and to close [the door] opposite it." The *Gra* comments that here the Tur is using the explanation of Rashi [to the above-mentioned Gemara, discussed in the

<sup>5</sup> This basic principle is mainly discussed in the Halachos of Shabbos (337:1).

<sup>6</sup> In *Shabbos* (75a), the Gemara says that even if someone holds that "something which one does not intend" is *muttar*; nevertheless, if he is engaged in an act which inevitably will accomplish the *assur* act, he cannot *claim* that he is merely "cutting off the head" [i.e. the intentional act] "but it will not die" (i.e. so his "lack of intent" for the *assur* act is not an acceptable reason for this to be *muttar*). [Here, the issue is whether opening a door *inevitably* accomplishes a "putting out" or "causing to burn" within the "candle".]

<sup>7</sup> source's wording: "According to how 'the Ri' explained."

<sup>8</sup> Similarly, the Rashba (to *Shabbos* *ibid.*) mentions that according to the *Sefer Ha'Aruch*, there can be no concern for "putting out" or "causing to burn" in such a way. [Actually, he is referring to the case of "tilting the surface on which a candle is standing."]

<sup>9</sup> The word "*ner*" is traditionally translated "candle", but the earlier sources generally do not use the word to refer to solid candles. Rashi explains that in the days of the Gemara, earthenware "lamps" were used; his full description is brought above (671:3).

Halachos of Shabbos (O.C. 277)]. [However, in the Halachos of Shabbos it is explicitly ruled that *closing* the door is no problem, when it comes to this concern for the wind.]

Accordingly, the *Shulchan Aruch* rules: **For the night of Shabbos, one has to place something [in such a way as] to be a barrier between the "candles" and the entrance, because of the wind - [i.e.] so it will not put out the "candles" when he opens the door.**

The *Mishnah Berurah* says that if one did *not* set up a "barrier", then of course it's *assur* to open the door.<sup>10</sup> In addition, he clarifies three points:

(1) During the week as well, one has to watch out for this, and be careful not to set up the candles opposite a place where there is significant wind. (It's just that on Shabbos one has to be *more* careful.)<sup>11</sup>

(2) Our Halacha is of course talking about someone who lights near his front door, such that the candles are opposite the open entrance when the door is opened. In fact, there is another case with a similar problem - someone who lights between the door and *the wall toward which the door opens*. In that case, it's also a problem to open the door, because one could bang the door into the candles - and put them out with *that*. (This is the explanation of *Rabbeinu Chananel*<sup>o</sup> (to the same Gemara), also brought in O.C. 277. [As mentioned above, the ruling there is that we consider it *assur* all three ways.]

(3) However (the *Mishnah Berurah* concludes in the name of the Bach<sup>o</sup>), if someone lights in the "winter house" [see above at the end of 671:8], "and there's a room *in front* of the winter house," then the lighter does *not* have to worry about the wind, because even if the door of the "winter house" is directly in line with the outer door<sup>12</sup>, nevertheless, anyone who opens the doors can make sure not to open the door of the "winter house" unless he first closes the outer door.

Points (2) and (3) seem to contradict each other, if we mention that when the concern is for the door banging into the candles - it's explicitly ruled in *siman 277* that it's *muttar* to open the door *gently* in that case. Given that, how come in point (3) [the "winter house"] the lighter can "plan to open the doors in a way that protects the candles," and in point (2) he cannot?

<sup>10</sup> He refers to his discussion in the *Bi'ur Halacha* (in the Halachos of Shabbos) about when it's *muttar* to open the door if he does it gently.

<sup>11</sup> The *Mishnah Berurah* here (and actually the Tur & *Shulchan Aruch* themselves as well) seems to be looking at the door as something which will inevitably "end up" being opened. This understanding would explain how he compares the Halacha here (which is talking about lighting while the door is still *closed*) with the Halacha of "lighting opposite the wind on a weekday" above [673:2] (which seems to be talking about lighting where the wind is blowing *now*).

<sup>12</sup> In addition, in order for the issue to be relevant at *all*, the candles would also have to be close enough to the outer door for them to be able to be blown out by the wind (*Mishnah Berurah* to O.C. 277, n2).