

TALMUDIC METHODOLOGY
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Shiur #23: *Eiruv Tavshilin* (Part 1)

When Yom Tov precedes Shabbat, the procedure known as *eiruv tavshilin* must be executed prior to Yom Tov to allow preparation for Shabbat during Yom Tov proper. What problem does *eiruv tavshilin* address, and by what mechanism does it allow one to prepare for Shabbat on the *chag*?

The gemara in *Beitza* (15b) raises the above question and offers three different approaches. Initially, Shemuel suggests that this halakhic institution possesses Biblical roots. Rashi (s.v. mai) already insists that Shemuel does not truly impute *de-orayta* status to *eiruv tavshilin*, but is merely hunting for some Biblical hint or allusion to this process. Shemuel cites the verse in *Shemot* (20:8) which demands that we "remember Shabbat" (*Zakhor et yom ha-Shabbat*). Though this verse dictates several additional *halakhot* (among them *Kiddush*), according to Shemuel it also implores us to highlight Shabbat when a condition arises in which our interest in Shabbat may diminish. Clearly, a "routine" Shabbat following the drama of a "long-awaited" *chag* may feel a bit anticlimactic and dull. To avoid this discrimination against Shabbat, an *eiruv tavshilin* "bookmarks" Shabbat before Yom Tov even begins, programming an awareness of Shabbat even during the euphoria of Yom Tov.

Rava offers a similar explanation of *eiruv tavshilin*, "so that a person may select quality for Shabbat as well as quality for Yom Tov." Presumably, Rava agrees in principle with Shemuel, perhaps without the Biblical allusion. By scheduling *eiruv tavshilin*, a person ensures actual food for Shabbat. It is not merely the spirit of Shabbat which *eiruv tavshilin* reinforces, but also the actual menu. Without *eiruv tavshilin*, foodstuffs, (or at least the choice items) may be exhausted during the *chag*.

Unlike Shemuel's and Rava's common thread - viewing *eiruv* as a protectant of Shabbat against the overwhelming charisma of the *chag* – Rav

Ashi suggests that the *eiruv* preserves the integrity of the *chag*. Fundamentally, cooking on a *chag* for Shabbat poses no halakhic problem. However, people may mistakenly infer that cooking may be performed on a *chag* even for regular days. Witnessing preparations for Shabbat during a *chag* may tempt or confuse people into preparing for weekday needs. To prevent this error, an *eiruv tavshilin* reminds them that preparations may only be conducted for a special Shabbat day to follow a *chag*, but not for a weekday.

Finally, Rabbi Elazar formulates a third understanding. Commencing preparation of Shabbat food during Yom Tov is forbidden. However, CONTINUING the preparation of this food is permissible. Having begun preparation of Shabbat food BEFORE the *chag*, we may continue it during *chag* proper.

Interestingly, the greatest divide seems to exist between the first three opinions and the final opinion of Rabbi Elazar. The first three views all concur that, fundamentally, it is Biblically permitted to cook on Yom Tov for Shabbat. Whether the upcoming Shabbat, per se, permits this form of preparation, or whether we rely upon a logic known as "*ho'il*" (cooking on *chag* for subsequent use can never be forbidden outright since the food can, theoretically, be used for Yom Tov itself), no biblical prohibition applies to cooking on *chag* for Shabbat. Various "secondary" issues, such as the diminished allure of Shabbat, or the confusion and possible future error, dictate the implementation of some symbol to avert these conditions.

Rabbi Elazar appears to adopt a different tactic: cooking on Yom Tov for Shabbat is FUNDAMENTALLY forbidden. However, completing a process of cooking is permissible (based upon a verse he cites). Unlike the symbolic role of *eiruv* according to the earlier opinions, Rabbi Elazar suggests a more substantive function - to launch a cooking process which will be subsequently culminated.

This duality - *eiruv* as mere symbol or *eiruv* as substantive - may underlie an interesting etymological assertion of the Rambam regarding the connotations of the word *eiruv*. The Rambam (*Yom Tov* 6:2) associates the term "*eiruv tavshilin*" with the process of *eiruv chatzeirot*, the mechanism that allows for carrying in courtyards on Shabbat. Each serves as a reminder – a graphic symbol to highlight a fact that may otherwise be neglected. *Eiruv*

chatzeirot reminds us that we cannot carry into actual public domains (preventing confusion among those who legitimately carry in semi-public domains), while *eiruv tavshilin* prevents forgetting Shabbat, or averts an error of cooking on *chag* for weekday use. Clearly, the Rambam aligns *eiruv* with the first model – a procedure to avert confusion or neglect.

The Raavad disagrees with the Rambam asserting that the term *eiruv* stems from the more common root of combining or mixing. By providing an *eiruv*, a person is 'mixing' or uniting the preparation of Yom Tov with the preparation of Shabbat needs thereby performing them together. The Ra'avad's etymology describes the combining of preparations – a description which would support Rava's view of pre-preparing Shabbat to lend it accent or, alternatively Rebbi Elazar's view of launching Shabbat preparation prior to *chag*. It would be difficult to harmonize this etymology with Rav Ashi's view of establishing a reminder to avoid confusion about Yom Tov cooking.

An interesting *nafka mina*, practical ramification, to this distinction emerges from the Rosh's initial comments to this gemara (*Beitza* 2:1). The Rosh raises the question as to whether there are any differences between Rava's view of protecting the integrity of Shabbat and Rav Ashi's view that *eiruv tavshilin* helps avert confusion about cooking on *chag*. The gemara implies one difference: fundamentally, according to Rava, the *eiruv* can be established during Yom Tov itself. Inasmuch as the *eiruv* aims to highlight the value of Shabbat so that it is not overwhelmed by *chag*, it can be arranged during Yom Tov proper. Practically, the Sages worried that the excitement of the *chag* would distract one from Shabbat preparation and no *eiruv* would be established. To avoid this danger, they decreed that the *eiruv* be fixed before *chag*. Fundamentally, however, it could function even if placed during the *chag*. Presumably, according to Rav Ashi, only an *eiruv* placed before the *chag* would serve as a deterrent to possible confusion about cooking on the *chag*.

The Rosh seeks an additional factor to discriminate between Rava's view of allocating importance to Shabbat and Rav Ashi's view of avoiding confusion regarding cooking on Yom Tov for weekdays. He suggests an "earlier prepared" *eiruv* as the difference. According to Rava, the *eiruv* must be set proximate to the *chag*, to accentuate Shabbat when it is most vulnerable. Preparing it earlier will not immediately showcase the significance of Shabbat. By contrast, according to Rav Ashi, any *eiruv*, even one

implemented well before the onset of the *chag*, will remind people that the cooking on Yom Tov is permissible only because it serves Shabbat; cooking for weekdays would not be allowed.

This determination - that Rava would oppose an *eiruv* which was positioned too early - can be contested. Even an *eiruv* placed well before the *chag* may highlight Shabbat. In fact, one could contend that the longer the *eiruv* has been operative, the more attention Shabbat generates!

However, it IS CLEAR that RABBI ELAZAR'S logic would demand implementation of *eiruv tavshilin* as close to the *chag* as possible. If the mechanism of *eiruv* entails the pre-*chag* launch of a cooking process to be CONTINUED during *chag*, the continuity may not be realized if the launch and the second stage are not proximate in time. If the *eiruv* serves as SYMBOL, it may make little difference when the symbol was established. If, however, the *eiruv* constitutes the START of a soon-to-be-completed process, we may require chronological CONTINUITY to assure this sequence.

An additional question may pertain to the obligation to prepare an *eiruv* even if all cooking has been completed prior to the *chag*. In an age of refrigeration many, if not most, prepare all Shabbat food prior to the *chag* to avoid the hassle. The question thus arises if a person who has no plan to cook on the *chag* for Shabbat may skip the mitzva of *eiruv*. Presumably, according to Rava, an *eiruv* is ALWAYS necessary to protect the value of Shabbat. Perhaps, according to Rav Ashi (and, for that matter, Rabbi Elazar), a person who does not plan to cook on *chag* for Shabbat would be exempted from preparing an *eiruv*.