



נדרים דף ע"ב

English Halacha Topics

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Kabalas Shabbos for Ladies

There's an interesting debate among the Poskim regarding the parameters of appointing an emissary to create a halachic status.

The Noda B'Yehuda cites a teshuva from Mahari"t that one cannot appoint someone to make his item hekdesch, sanctified for the Beis Hamikdash. This is based on the Talmudic principle "words cannot be given over to an emissary." However, the Noda B'Yehuda takes dispute with it, based on the Gemara on our daf. A husband can tell an apatropus (emissary), "All the nedarim which my wife will make until I return from a certain place – you should annul." We thus see that one can indeed hand over the ability to create halachic ramifications; and hekdesch should be the same. Even Rav Yoshia does not allow it only because there's a source specifically by nedarim (Noda B'Yehuda Y.D. 147).

Perhaps we can offer another proof for the Noda B'Yehuda. Shabbos candles are an obligation incumbent on both man and woman, as the Shulchan Aruch states clearly (O.C. 263:2). The custom is that a wife lights, because "they are at home and take care of the house." The Mishnah Berurah cites a deeper reason, that the First Woman caused the First Man to sin, resulting in his death, referred to as "extinguishing the light of the world." So women light Shabbos candles to rectify that.

What emerges is that the wife lights also on behalf of the husband. As the Mordechai writes, "One who is with his wife does not need to light, as his wife lights and says the blessing for him" (Shabbos 2:294). Most explicit is the Gra"z: the wife is the emissary of the husband. Perhaps, then, this is another proof to the Noda B'Yehuda, as one appoints another person to create the holiness of Shabbos. But, we may refute it, since candles have also a physical action involved, so are not considered mere "words."

We should point out that although the wife lights for both herself and her husband, they have different halachos therein. Many opinions maintain that once the woman lights, she has accepted upon herself the Shabbos. Insofar as the Mishnah Bereurah (ibid. 6) cites the custom that after lighting, she **drops** the match and does not extinguish it, which is forbidden on Shabbos. However, the rest of the household do not have to begin Shabbos until Borchu is recited in shul (Rema). Even if the man

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himself lights the candles, he does not thereby accept Shabbos. Still, it is better for him to make an explicit condition that he doesn't thereby accept Shabbos (M.B.).

What is the best solution if the wife is not home or cannot light? Should the husband light the Shabbos candles, or a grown daughter?

Rav Elyashiv zt"l ruled that a girl should light, for the same reasons above that women light (Shvus Yitzchak ibid. note 1). On the other hand, Rav Moshe Feinstein zt"l was quoted as saying that the husband should light. It follows the rule that "it is better to do mitzvos yourself, over a delegate"; a wife is different because "one's wife is like himself" (Radiance of Shabbos). Rav Nissim Karelitz was unsure which stance to take (Chut Shani Vol. 4 23:8). Either way, if neither of the parents are home (or can light), definately a daughter should light, over a boy (Shemiras Shabbos K'Hilchasa 45:34).

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