

Eiruv Tavshilin (ET) for Erev Yom Tov, THU May 25th

When Yom Tov falls on Friday (or Thursday-Friday), we make an ET on Erev Yom Tov, which begins the preparations for Shabbat, so that we will be able to continue cooking for Shabbat on Friday. Without the ET, cooking (and other things) is allowed on Yom Tov, but only for the day itself. Making an ET on Erev Yom Tov, permits cooking, baking, and lighting candles on Friday (Yom Tov) for Shabbat.

Sometime before Yom Tov, one takes a Challa (roll) or Matza and a cooked food (hard boiled egg, piece of gefilte fish, piece of chicken, etc.) which will be eaten on Shabbat (many eat the ET at Seuda Shlishit, but it only must last until after one has finished cooking on Friday, to be effective). With both items in hand, one recites the bracha...

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, אשר קדשנו במצותיו, וצונו על מצות ערוב.

and then makes the Eruv declaration... [One should explain ET to his family, either at the time of making the Eruv, or some convenient time before or after.] It is still traditional to say it in Aramaic, but you should feel free to follow the Aramaic with Hebrew and/or English...

בדין ערובא יהא שרא לנא למיפא ולבשלא ולאטמנא, ולאדלקא שרגא,
ולמעבד כל צרכנא, מיומא טבא לשבתא, [לנו ולכל הדרים בעיר הזאת].
בערוב הזה יהיה מתר לנו לאפות ולבשל ולהטמין ולהדליק נר ולעשות
כל צרכינו מיום טוב לשבת [לנו ולכל הדרים בעיר הזאת].

With this EIRUV it becomes permitted for us to bake, cook, to “hide” food (refers to packing food into an oven in such a way that not only will heat be maintained, but increased as well), to light candles, and do all other needs on Yom Tov for Shabbat [for us and all Jews who live in this city].

After the bracha and declaration, one places the Eiruv items in a secure place so that they will not accidentally be eaten before cooking for Shabbat is finished.

REMINDER: Kindling fire is forbidden on Yom Tov. Extinguishing a fire is forbidden. Only lighting a fire from a pre-existing flame is permitted. As is handling the candle, match, etc.

The bracketed phrase in the Eiruv declaration is said when making the Eiruv not just for yourself and family, but for others who might have forgotten to make their own Eiruv. This is usually done by the Rav of the kehila. It can also be done by anyone. However... in order to make this kind of ET, one has to take the ET

food, give it to someone else (one's spouse or child above the age of mitzvot, or, some say, only to someone not part of your household) to "acquire" it on behalf of (unknown) others. Then he takes it back, makes the bracha and declaration, including the extra phrase in brackets.

A person who forgets to make an ET, or whose ET was eaten before he had a chance to cook on Friday for Shabbat, is covered by this "advanced" ET - but only the first time it happens. One who purposely does not make an ET, intending to rely on the ET of others, is NOT covered by it.

There are two different ways to understand ET. One is that cooking on Yom Tov for the following day is forbidden by the Torah only when the next day is CHOL. For Shabbat, it would be allowed. But the Sages said "no", lest one makes a mistake on a subsequent Yom Tov that is not followed by Shabbat. Then the Sages said, if you make a start of cooking for Shabbat before Yom Tov and you perform the ET on Erev Yom Tov, this will clearly consciously and subconsciously distinguish between Yom Tov followed by Shabbat and Yom Tov followed by a weekday and then there is no "danger of mistake" and cooking on Yom Tov Friday for Shabbat is permitted, and is considered to have already begun on Erev Yom Tov.

The other opinion holds that we cannot cook on Friday (Yom Tov) even for Shabbat, but with an ET, one may cook on Friday so that in case unexpected guests should happen to come to our home, there will be food for them. If no guests show up, the food can be used for Shabbat. This opinion insists that one finish his cooking on Friday a reasonable amount of time before Shabbat, so that the food could really be served to unexpected guests on Yom Tov. The first opinion would allow cooking until close to candle lighting time.

ET is a rabbinic mitzva that was meant to solve the problem of providing fresh cooked food for Shabbat, and at the same time to preserve the proper observance and respect for Yom Tov. ET does not permit anything that is a Torah prohibition, but it does (properly) bypass what would otherwise be a rabbinic violation.

- Someone who does not plan to do any cooking on Yom Tov (invited out for meals or whatever) but does plan on lighting candles on Friday for Shabbat, should also make an ET. [Because circumstances differ, it is advisable to consult your Rav on this issue ET, yes or no; bracha yes or no.]