

A Practical Guide to Shabbos – Class #10

Tying and Untying

By Rabbi Dovid Bendory

ויברך אלהים את יום השביעי, הקב"ה ברך וקדש את יום השביעי, וישראל אינן חייבין אלא לשמור ולקדש את השבת, מכאן אמרו כל המברך ומקדש על היין בלילי שבתות מאריכין לו ימיו בעולם הזה ולעולם הבא, שנ' כי בי ירבו ימיך בעולם הזה ולעולם הבא ויוסיפו לך שנות חיים לעתיד לבא

פרקי דרבי אליעזר - פרק יט

"And G-d blessed the seventh day..." (Gen. 2:3) Hashem blessed and sanctified the seventh day, but the Jewish People are only obligated to keep and sanctify Shabbat [i.e., we have no obligation to bless]. Thus Chazal teach, "Anyone who blesses and sanctifies Shabbat over wine on Friday night will live a long life in This World and the Next, as it is written, 'For by me your days will be lengthened in This World and the Next, and many years of life will come to you.' (Prov. 9:11)"

-- *Pirkei d'Rebbe Eliezer - Chapter 19*

קושר -- *Kosher* – Tying

Av Melacha – making a permanent (professional?) knot

Principle – permanently attaching two ends of string together (without use of a third item)

Toldot – twisting fibers of string together to form a stronger string or rope

Definition -- What is a knot?

- Does it need to be a "professional knot" -- like a sailor's or boy scout's knot?
- What is a knot?
 - Both ends of the string pass through each other
 - The knot stays tight either by itself or with a bow and cannot be easily undone
- What is "permanent"?
 - One month?
 - One week?
 - 24 hours?
 - In between?

Examples:

- A single knot (half a shoe tie)
- A single knot with a bow (like tying a shoe)
- A double knot on a shoe
- A square knot

- A slip knot
- A single knot in the end of a string / tying a garbage bag or bread bag
- A single knot via two corners of a garbage bag
- A double knot via two corners of a garbage bag
- Two separate (diagonal) single knots on a garbage bag (one on top of the other)
- *Tzitzit*
- An apron, bib, etc.
- A men's tie
- A woman's kerchief
- A functional tie on a dress
- A decorative tie on a dress
- A bow in a girl's hair
- The tie on a *sefer Torah*

Possible *Toldot*

twirling *tzitzit* threads

braiding (nope!)

twist ties

tied doors, gates, lids, etc.

מתיר -- Matir – Untying

Av Melacha – untying a permanent knot in order to re-tie it, repair it, etc.

Principle – detaching (for a constructive purpose) two objects that were permanently fastened to each other

Toldot – cutting a string with a permanent knot in order to tie a new one

Conditions:

- In general, any knot that is forbidden to tie is forbidden to untie; any knot which is permitted to tie is permitted to untie.
- An accidental knot is not a knot!
- In a case of great discomfort, one can be lenient with a knot that was tied with intent to last less than one week.

Possible *Toldot*

cutting a knot out of a string

untying a roast / turkey / etc.

cutting the string / knot out of the string on a roast / turkey / etc.

tied doors, gates, lids, etc.

accidental double-knot in a shoelace

double-knot in a shoelace that is never untied

accidental knot in a shoelace

a tie that went *farblungent*