

Halacha Newsletter

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by Rabbi Yosef Shusterman

Chanuka 5765

Laws of Candlelighting
First Candle
Tuesday Night,
Kislev 25, Dec 7

- 1) One should gather together the entire family for the kindling of the Chanuka lights so as to publicize the celebration of the miracle.
- 2) It is preferable to kindle the Menora immediately after sunset, (excluding Friday and Saturday nights) and the candles should burn for at least 50 minutes. If one was unable to light at that time, he is permitted to do so the entire night. If the entire household is asleep he should wake them. Otherwise, it is questionable whether a Brocho may be recited.
- 3) Once the time for candlelighting arrives, one may not do any work, eat (excluding a snack), or even learn Torah.
- 4) Chanuka candles must burn at least one half hour into the night.
- 5) If a flame goes out before the required length of time has passed, one should rekindle it (except for Friday night) without a Brocho. The Shamash need not be relit.



- 6) Although all types of candles are permitted, it is preferable to use olive oil, except for the Shamash, which should be beeswax.
- 7) The Shamash should stand higher than the rest of the flames. All the other candles should be on the same level in a straight row.
- 8) One cannot fulfill the Mitzva using electric lights.
- 9) The Chabad custom is to place the Menora in a doorway opposite the Mezuzah. The flame should be between 3 and 10 "tfochim" (approximately 9.5 to 31.5 inches) high. However, even if it is higher, it is passably kosher (up to 20 cubits from the floor).

10) It is customary to wear a gartel while lighting the candles. Except for Friday and Saturday night, we do not wear Shabbos clothing.

11) Before lighting the candles, one recites all of the appropriate Brochos. One should not talk between the Brochos and the lighting of the Menora. After all the candles are lit, we say "HaNeros Halolu." The order of the Brochos is as follows:

- a) L'Hadlik Ner Chanuka
- b) Sheeso Nissim
- c) Shehechiyonu (recited when lighting the candles for the first time only)

12) Except on Friday night, it is customary to sit next to the Menora for a half hour after lighting the candles.

13) The light provided by the Chanuka candles should not be used for any purpose, such as reading or working.

14) If the Shamash goes out it may not be rekindled from the other Chanuka candles. Likewise, none of the candles may be lit from the others.

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15) The first night's candle is placed to the far right of the Menora. As we add a candle on each subsequent night we place it to the left of the previous night's candles. The candles are kindled from left to right, so that the additional candle of each night is kindled first.

16) While the candles are burning, especially during the obligatory first half hour, women should not sew, work, do laundry, etc. Some have a custom that men also refrain from work.

17) Women and girls (over twelve) are obligated to perform the Mitzva of lighting Chanuka candles. Hence, if they are unable to fulfill their obligation through someone else's lighting the candles they must light on their own.

18) The Mitzva of Ner Chanuka should be performed in one's own home. Thus, if one is a dinner guest due to return home that evening, the Mitzva may not be fulfilled in the host's home. However, an overnight guest may light his candles in his host's home.

19) If a man travels during Chanuka (i.e. traveling salesman) and finds himself in a hotel or motel, a Rav should be consulted regarding the proper procedure for lighting the candles.

20) Some are careful to use new wicks each night. Others hold that one may reuse the earlier nights' wicks. In fact, according to this second opinion, the used wicks are better because they are easier to light. When lighting with used wicks, that wick which was previously kindled first (i.e. yesterday's leftmost one) should be used in today's first, leftmost

candle. See paragraph 15, above.

21) Friday evening, the lighting procedure is as follows:

- a) Mincha
- b) Ner Chanuka
- c) Neros Shabbos

Shabbos Candle lighting time is 4:26 p.m.

Chanuka candles must burn at least one half hour into the night. Before reciting the Brochos one must take special care to make sure that the Menora's oil cups contain enough oil to burn for the proper length of time. Likewise if one is using candles, they must be of sufficient length to last the requisite amount of time. The ordinary 4 inch Chanuka candles will not burn long enough for Friday night use.

22) The Menora is Muktzta and may not be moved throughout the entire Shabbos.

23) Preparations for lighting the Menora on Saturday night must not begin before Shabbos is over at 5:26 p.m.

24) On Motzei Shabbos the candles are lit in Shul before Havdala. At home they are lit after Havdala but before saying "V'yitein L'cho."

25) If one fills the Menora with a single day's supply of oil, and, after the candles go out, some of the oil still remains, it may be used in the candles on a subsequent night. After the candles burn out at the close of Chanuka, any remaining oil and wicks may not be used for other purposes. The leftover oil and wicks the leftover oil and wicks apply only if the oil and wicks were actually placed in the Menora and kindled.

However, oil remaining in a bottle or other container

may be used for any purpose.

26) It is customary to give Chanuka "gelt".

27) Additional Tzedaka should be given during Chanuka.

28) Fasting is forbidden during Chanuka.

Tfilos of Chanuka

1) In shul the Chanuka candles are kindled at the close of Mincha before Oleinu. The appropriate Brochos are recited. The person saying the Brochos in shul repeats them when he lights at home. If he has no family and lights alone, Shehechiyonu is not repeated. In the morning before Shacharis, the candles are also lit in shul but without the Brochos.

2) Being that there is no Musaf in Chanuka, an Ovel, a mourner, may daven at the Omud except for Hallel.

3) In the Shmoneh Esrei, "Al HaNissim" is added. If one forgets to say it, but reminds himself before saying HaShem's name at the completion of the Brocho, he says Al HaNissim and continues from "V'al Kulam". If, however, he already completed the Shem, the Shmoneh Esrei is completed and not repeated.

4) Tachnun is not said throughout Chanuka.

Did You Know?

The number of candles (excluding the Shamash) used throughout Chanuka is 36. This corresponds to the 36 hours of light that illuminated the world from Friday morning until the Saturday night of creation.

The combined Gematria of the letters on the Dreidel (Nun, Gimel, Hay, and Shin) is the same as that of the word "Moshiach" (358).

5) Complete Hallel is said after the Shmoneh Esrei throughout the entire Chanuka, followed by Kriyas HaTorah, Ashrei, (Lamnatzeiach is omitted) Uva L'Zion, etc.

6) Al HaNissim is also added in the second Brocho of Bentching. If one forgot to say it, when he reaches "Horachoman Hu Yizakeinu" he should add, "Horachaman Hu Ya'aseh Lonu Nissim K'mo Sheoso La'avoseinu Bayomim Hoheim Bizman HazeH." Afterwards he continues with "BiymeI Matisyohu."

Rosh Chodesh Teves

Monday Dec. 13

7) We insert Ya'aleh Vyavo in both the Shmoneh Esrei and in the Bentching. If it was omitted at night, one does not have to repeat it. The rules for one who forgets it during Shacharis or Mincha are summarized in the box below. If one forgot to add Ya'aleh Vyavo in Shacharis, but has already davened Musaf, he need not repeat the Shmoneh Esrei of Shacharis.

8) Should one forget "Ya'aleh Vyavo" in Bentching - if he reminds himself before beginning the next Brocho ("HoKeil Ovinu") the following is said: "Boruch Atoh ... Melech Haolam Shenossan Roshei Chodoshim L'amo Yisroel L'zikoron," and the Bentching is continued. However, if the Brocho

"HoKeil Ovinu" was begun, the Bentching is completed and need not be repeated.

Laws Of Rosh Chodesh

9) It is customary for women to refrain from doing certain work on Rosh Chodesh (e.g., sewing, washing clothes, etc.) The reason for this is that the women did not participate in worshipping the "Egel" (the Golden Calf). In this merit, Hashem gave the women a special "Yom Tov."

10) Haircuts should not be taken on Rosh Chodesh, even if it is on Friday (L'kovod Shabbos).

11) It is customary to eat something additional in honor of Rosh Chodesh.

Ya'aleh V'Yavo on Rosh Chodesh

We insert Y'aleh V'Yavo in the Shmoneh Esrei and in the Bentching. If it was omitted at night, one does not have to repeat it. If one forgets it during Shacharis or Mincha, it must be inserted according to the following rules:

Where one remembers	When to say Y'aleh V'Yavo
Before Shem at conclusion of R'tzei	At the point he remembers it: continue with V'sechezena
After Brocha of R'tzei before Modim	At the point he remembers it: continue with Modim
After beginning Modim	Return to R'tzei and continue from there
After completing the Shmoneh Esrei	Repeat entire Shmoneh Esrei from beginning