

# CHANUKAH

RABBI TZVI YAAKOV STEIN

## WHEN TO LIGHT

- One should daven Maariv before lighting candles unless one is lighting before the proper time to daven Maariv (Tzeis/nightfall). One should not miss davening with a minyan because of this Halacha<sup>1</sup>.
- If you must leave the house before candle lighting time, the Menorah can be lit with a Bracha from the time of Plag Haminchah, which is approximately an hour before shkiyah. However, there must be enough oil for the Menorah to stay lit until a half hour after the regular lighting time which is approximately an hour and a half after Shkiah<sup>2</sup>.
- The best time to light the Menorah is 10-15 minutes after shkiyah (approx. 4:45 pm) and it should stay lit until 36 minutes after Tzeis Hacoachavim<sup>3</sup>.
- If you can't light at the above time, you can light all night<sup>4</sup> with a Bracha<sup>5</sup>. However, it is better to light earlier in the night.
- From shkiyah and preferably a half hour before shkiyah, no napping, no haircuts, or eating bread\an egg worth of mezonos (e.g. cake). Other foods are fine in any amount<sup>6</sup>.
- Those who are delayed in lighting the Menorah and want to eat a meal, a shomer, who already lit, to remind them to light. If there's no shomer, an alarm should be set<sup>7</sup>. Snacking on food is allowed even without a shomer<sup>8</sup>. Women who are waiting for their husbands to light should preferably not eat a meal either<sup>9</sup> unless they set an alarm.
- If the Menorah is lit for half an hour (technically 36 minutes<sup>10</sup>) tzeis (nightfall), it can be extinguished<sup>11</sup>. However, if you are home it's better to stay lit for as long as possible<sup>12</sup>.

## BIDIEVED

- If there's a choice between lighting before shkiyah or lighting late into the night, lighting later is the better choice as long as someone in the household is awake<sup>13</sup> (R' Moshe Feinstein zt"l says that you don't need to have anyone awake<sup>14</sup>).
- You only light the Menorah where you're going to sleep.

Therefore, one cannot light at a Chanukah party, etc.<sup>15</sup>

- If you're not going to be home at all that night, then a shliach should be appointed to light for you in your home. No brachah is made<sup>16</sup>.
- It's better for you to light later in the night than to have a shliach light for you at the proper time<sup>17</sup>.
- If the spouse isn't going to be home until late, it's best to wait for them, unless they really don't care to be at the lighting (even in Eretz Yisroel)<sup>18</sup>.

## MENORAH PLACEMENT

- Nowadays that we light inside, many say that you should light in a doorway so that you can be surrounded by Mitzvos<sup>19</sup>. Others say that the window is better because there will be more Pirsumei Nissa there<sup>20</sup>. Chasidim usually do the former and Litvish the latter<sup>21</sup>.
- If no one on the street is going to see the Menorah, then putting it in the doorway is definitely better<sup>22</sup>.
- According to the basic Halacha, the Menorah should be lit in the part of the house where you eat because that's where the most Pirsumei Nissa is<sup>23</sup>. However, use your judgement to light in the room where there will be the most Pirsumei Nissa whether it's in the living room, kitchen, etc.<sup>24</sup>.
- The requirement to light a Menorah is only if you have a house etc. to sleep in. However, one who is traveling in a car or plane etc. the entire night, can light a Menorah there<sup>25</sup>, or turn on an incandescent flashlight (not an LED bulb) without a Brachah<sup>26</sup>.
- Although the Menorah is supposed to be lower than 10 tefachim, it's still better to light in the window even if it's higher than 10 tefachim because publicizing the miracle is more important<sup>27</sup>.
- If one lives in an apartment building and the window is higher than 20 Amos, and there are only one or two neighbors who will see the Menorah in the window, then it's better to light in a doorway<sup>28</sup>. If many people live across from the window, then it's better to light in the window (assuming that it's in a room that people in the apartment will see the Menorah too)<sup>29</sup>.

- Yeshiva Bachurim should light wherever the Yeshiva allows<sup>30</sup>.

## TRAVELING ON CHANUKAH

- One who's leaving the house that night to travel and won't be sleeping home can still light the Menorah at home before leaving (after plag hamincha). One must be cautious about leaving fire unattended<sup>31</sup>.
- Those that are eating and sleeping away from home can light the Menorah where they are and don't have to light at home. Especially if no one is going to be home<sup>32</sup>.
- Those who slept away from home and the next day are still visiting at candle lighting time, can light there at that location, even though they'll be returning home that night<sup>33</sup>. However, some say to wait and light at home, even if later at night<sup>34</sup>. It's better to eat a meal where they were staying<sup>35</sup> (very common on Motzei Shabbos).
- If one is away from home, sleeping in one house but eating in another, it's preferred to light where eating<sup>36</sup>. If necessary, lighting where one is sleeping is allowed<sup>37</sup>.
- If one is traveling from out of town and sleeping away from home and mainly eating in a restaurant/catering hall, they can light where they are eating<sup>38</sup>.
- A yeshiva bachur who doesn't eat or sleep at home but happens to be home at candle lighting time, can light at home<sup>39</sup>.

## CANDLE LIGHTING

- Some say to wash the hands before lighting the menorah<sup>40</sup>.
- Those lighting after nightfall should have the candles set up earlier, so that they can light sooner<sup>41</sup>.
- Most have the custom to light the candle on the right side and on subsequent nights, add the new candle to the left of the previous night's candle. One should follow their minhag.
- It makes no difference in what order the candles are set up, only the order of the actual lighting makes a difference.
- Light from left to right<sup>42</sup>. Stand to the far left of the Menorah and light the candle on the far left so that you don't need to pass over any candles<sup>43</sup>.
- If the candles go out after they are all lit, they don't need to be relit, even on Friday<sup>44</sup> but it's better to relight

them<sup>45</sup>.

- This only applies after all the candles are lit at once but if one of the candles goes out before all the others are lit then the extinguished candles need to be relit since all the candles weren't lit at the same time<sup>46</sup>.
- If the candles were never properly put in a place that they could've stayed lit (wind) then they're required to be relit without a brachah<sup>47</sup>.
- If a candle goes out, don't relight it from any of the lit candles, since according to the Halacha they don't have to be relit, it's taking from a flame of a mitzva to light something that's not a mitzva<sup>48</sup>. You can use the candles from the Menorah to light another person's Menorah after it has burned for the minimum amount of time, since they're both mitzvos<sup>49</sup>.
- One should not talk until all candles are lit<sup>50</sup>. If there was talking after the first candle was already lit, then no new brachah is said<sup>51</sup>.
- Haneiros Hallalu should be said after the first candle is lit while lighting the other candles. If that's not possible, one should say it afterwards<sup>52</sup>.
- The mitzva of Pirsumei Nissa is only at the time of lighting, and not afterwards. therefore, there's no reason to add extra oil<sup>53</sup>. Some say that there is additional Pirsumei Nissa if the flames burn for longer (especially when viable to the public).
- When lighting the candles, the shamash should be left on the wick until most of the wick is burning because that's considered a respectful way to light a candle<sup>54</sup>.
- There should be a shamash lit next to the Menorah<sup>55</sup> even if there's a light on in the room<sup>56</sup>.
- It's preferable to have a light on in the room in addition to the shamash<sup>57</sup>.
- Each Menorah should preferably have a shamash<sup>58</sup>.
- A Shamash that is part of the Menorah, should be lit after all the candles so that it won't be mistaken for the actual menorah. However, if it was lit before other candles, it is still considered the Shamash.
- One should have in mind that the lighting of the Menorah is to praise and thank Hashem for all the miracles.<sup>59</sup>
- Everyone in the household should be present for the Brachos and lighting of the Menorah<sup>60</sup>. See earlier regarding waiting for a spouse etc.

- The prevalent minhag is that women don't light Menorah unless they live alone (in which case they are obligated to light).<sup>61</sup> However, if they want to, they can light with a brachah<sup>62</sup>.
- There's no requirement to sit next to the candles, even for the first half hour. However, many have that custom to do so. When the family is late for a Chanukah party or trip and it's causing shalom bayis issues etc. then they should leave immediately without sitting next to the candles (the candles can't be extinguished until they were for for a half-hour after nightfall).
- The minhag is that women don't do work for a half hour after the candles are lit<sup>63</sup>. The type of melachah to avoid is melachah that can't be done on Chol Hamoed. Cooking, baking, mopping, writing, serving, are all allowed<sup>64</sup>.

## SHABBOS

- The earliest one can light is plag hamincha which is approximately 60 minutes before sunset. However, one should light closer to Shabbos, but before the time they normally accept Shabbos<sup>65</sup>.
- On Friday, it's better (not required) to daven Mincha before lighting the Menorah<sup>66</sup>.
- One should not miss davening with a minyan because of this Halacha<sup>67</sup>.
- Menorah lighting should be done before Shabbos candles<sup>68</sup>. A man can still light Chanukah candles after his wife lit SHabbos candles (before shkiyah).
- If there's little time, then after one candle is lit, the Shabbos candles can then be lit by the woman of the house (or by the man if he is doing both), and you don't have to wait until all the candles of the Menorah are lit<sup>69</sup>.
- Make sure there's enough oil to last until a half hour after nightfall<sup>70</sup>.
- On Motzei Shabbos, either Havdalah or Menorah can be done first<sup>71</sup>.

## LIGHTING IN HOTELS

- If the hotel gives permission to light in the room, then it is preferable to light in the hotel room and if people will see it from outside then preferably put it in the window<sup>72</sup>.
- If that's not possible (ex. danger or no permission etc.) light in the hotel dining room (with permission).

- Lighting in a lobby or hallway is really not preferable but if necessary then try and eat your meals there.
- If the hotel does not allow lighting in the room, one may not do so (and may not be yotzei). They should light a (non L.E.D) flashlight or electric Shabbos candles (battery) without a bracha.

## AL HANISIM

- Al Hanisim is said in Shemona Esrei and Birchas Hamazon<sup>73</sup> but not in Al Hamichyah<sup>74</sup>.
- If it's forgotten, then they don't need to be repeated<sup>75</sup>.

## MISCELLANEOUS

- Jelled oil is acceptable<sup>76</sup>.
- Any pure oil is acceptable.
- Oil and wicks can be reused from the previous night<sup>77</sup>. The same applies to the glass or plastic cups which hold the oil.
- Even though there's no requirement to eat a special Seudah, there's a mitzvah to do so. If songs are sung, then it is considered a Seudas mitzva<sup>78</sup>.
- Dreidels aren't muktza on Shabbos but playing for prizes is not allowed<sup>79</sup>.
- On the last day of Chanuka it's best to stipulate that the oil that burns past a half hour has no kedusha and therefore it can be disposed of in any way<sup>80</sup>.
- Many have the custom to burn all the extra oil from the menorah and the wicks<sup>81</sup>.
- This only applies to the leftovers from the initial half hour. Anything from after that can be disposed of in any way<sup>82</sup>.
- Visiting kivrei tzaddikim is allowed. Some say the neshama is not in the regular cemetery on days that we do not say tachanun. However, there's nothing wrong with visiting the cemetery.
- The Menorah can be cleaned on the eighth night, after it has been extinguished. It doesn't have to be delayed until after Chanukah is over.
- The actual Menorah has no holiness. It can be disposed of in any way. Disposable Menoras that say "haneiros Halulu" etc. can be wrapped in a bag and thrown out.
- Money tips to Rebbeim\teachers can come from Maaser<sup>83</sup>.

1.	משנה ברורה (סימן תערב סעיף קטן א)	28.	שיעורי הלכה (פרק לח אות ה)	56.	הליכות שלמה (פרק טז הערה 95)
2.	שולחן ערוך (סימן תערב סעיף א)	29.	שו"ת שבט הלוי (חלק ד סימן סה)	57.	הליכות שלמה (פרק טז דבר הלכה אות כז)
3.	מקדש ישראל (סימן קל)	30.	הליכות שלמה (פרק יד סעיף ח)	58.	מגן אברהם (סימן תרעג סעיף קטן ה)
4.	שולחן ערוך (סימן תערב סעיף ב)	31.	משנה ברורה (סימן תרע"א סעיף קטן ב-ג)	59.	הליכות שלמה (פרק טז סעיף ט)
5.	משנה ברורה (סימן תערב סעיף קטן יא)	32.	שיעורי הלכה (פרק לט אות א)	60.	קובץ הלכות (פרק יא סעיף ט)
6.	מ"ב ס' תרע"ב ס"ק י	33.	הליכות שלמה (פרק יד סעיף יט)	61.	משנה ברורה (סימן תרעה סעיף קטן ט)
7.	שיעורי הלכה (פרק לה סעיף א)	34.	שיעורי הלכה (פרק לט אות ב)	62.	לא מצאתי מקור לזה - והמנהג אינו כן
8.	קובץ הלכות (פרק ב סעיף ז)	35.	שיעורי הלכה (פרק לט אות ד)	63.	שולחן ערוך (סימן תרע סעיף א)
9.	הליכות שלמה (פרק טו סעיף ו)	36.	רמ"א (סימן תרעז סעיף א)	64.	קובץ הלכות (פרק ד בערה ו)
10.	מקדש ישראל (סימן קכא) בשם החזון איש	37.	קובץ הלכות (פרק יב סעיף יד)	65.	משנה ברורה סימן תרעט ס"ק ב
11.	שולחן ערוך (סימן תרעב סעיף ב)	38.	אורחות רבינו (חלק ג סעיף צג)	66.	משנה ברורה (סימן תרעט סעיף קטן ב)
12.	קובץ הלכות פרק ג סעיף ב	39.	קובץ הלכות (פרק יב הערה לג)	67.	אליה רבה (סימן תרעט סעיף קטן א)
13.	שו"ת שבט הלוי (חלק ד סימן סו)	40.	מקדש ישראל (סימן קצט)	68.	שולחן ערוך (סימן תרעט סעיף א)
14.	שו"ת אגרות משה (אורח חיים חלק ד סימן קה אות ז)	41.	מ"ב ס' תרע"ב ס"ק א	69.	בן איש חי (וישב שנה א סעיף כ)
15.	משנה ברורה (סימן תרעז סעיף קטן יב)	42.	שולחן ערוך (סימן תרעז סעיף ה)	70.	משנה ברורה סימן תרעט ס"ק ב
16.	אגרות משה (אורח חיים חלק א סימן קצ)	43.	משנה ברורה (סימן תרעז סעיף קטן יא)	71.	משנה ברורה (סימן תרפא סעיף קטן ג)
17.	שו"ת שבט הלוי חלק ד סימן סו	44.	שולחן ערוך (סימן תרעג סעיף ב)	72.	חובת הדר תנוכה פרק ב אות ט
18.	שמעתי דמשה (שמועות סימן תרעב סעיף א)	45.	משנה ברורה (סימן תרעג סעיף קטן כז)	73.	שולחן ערוך (סימן תרפב סעיף א)
19.	שולחן ערוך (סימן תרעא סעיף ז)	46.	ביאור הלכה (סימן תרעג ד"ה אם כבתה)	74.	משנה ברורה (סימן תרפב סעיף קטן ב)
20.	שולחן ערוך (סימן תרעא סעיף ה)	47.	משנה ברורה (סימן תרעג סעיף קטן כה)	75.	שולחן ערוך (סימן תרפב סעיף א)
21.	פסקי תשובות תרעא ג	48.	משנה ברורה (סימן תרעד סעיף קטן ז)	76.	שיעורי הלכה (פרק לז אות ז)
22.	תשובות והנהגות (חלק ב סימן שמב)	49.	רמ"א תרע"ד סעיף א	77.	ע"ג ד
23.	רמ"א (סימן תרעז סעיף א)	50.	מקדש ישראל (סימן רי)	78.	רמ"א (סימן תרע סעיף ב)
24.	שיעורי הלכה (פרק לט אות ג)	51.	פסקי תשובות (סימן תרע"ב סעיף קטן ו)	79.	מקדש ישראל (סימן רעד)
25.	שו"ת בצל החכמה (חלק ד סימן קכז)	52.	משנה ברורה (סימן תרעז סעיף קטן ח)	80.	משנה ברורה (סימן תרעב סעיף קטן ז)
26.	מקדש ישראל (סימן עד)	53.	משנה ברורה (סימן תערב סעיף קטן ו)	81.	שולחן ערוך סימן תרעז סעיף ד)
27.	ערוך השולחן (סימן תרע"א סעיף כב)	54.	ביאור הלכה (סימן תרעג ד"ה הדלקה)	82.	שיעורי הלכה (פרק לז אות יד)
		55.	רמ"א (סימן תרעג סעיף א)	83.	צדקה ומשפט (פרק ו סעיף קטן לד)