



הלכות חנוכה הרב גרינברג שליט"א ק"ק וביהמ"ד גולדרס גרין



1. The מצוה The נר חנוכה מצוה tells us that there are three levels of observance of the מצוה of חנוכה. 1. The basic מצוה, and the עיקר להלכה, is that a single light is kindled in each household every night of חנוכה, regardless of the number of people in the household. 2. In the home of the מהדרין, each family member lights one light every night. 3. In the home of the מהדרין מן המהדרין, according to the מחבר, a single light is lit on the first night and an additional light on each subsequent night and, according to the רמ"א, this is repeated by each member of the household - including children who have reached the age of חינוך י"ד, רמ"א ס"ס תרע"ה מ"ב ס"ק י"ד.

Where each member of the household lights his own מנורה (ממ"ה לרמ"א) care should be taken not to position the מנורות too closely to each other. This is so that it should be easily identifiable that the household is ממ"ה and each household member is lighting an additional light per night and not be misinterpreted to represent the total number of people lighting in the household. This הלכה is applicable even on the first night although no misinterpretation is possible, ס"ס תרע"א ס"ב ומ"ב ס"ק י"ב. Up to and including the third night two people may light at opposite ends of the same מנורה since each one's lights are distinctly identifiable.

Women are also required to light חנוכה lights, ס"ס תרע"ה ס"ג ומ"ב ס"ק ט"ו. A wife does not light for herself if her husband lights at home because she and her husband are considered one - אשתו כגופו. However, if her husband is away from home and will not return home before all household members are asleep, she may light for him and he need not light where he is. However, if he will return while members of the household are still awake she should wait for her husband to light when he comes home, ס"ס תרע"ז מ"ב ס"ק ב' ושע"ה צ"ס ק"ד' בשם תה"ד.

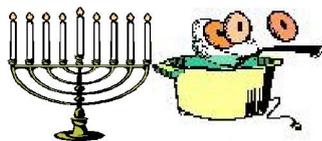
2. Benefit It is forbidden to have any benefit from the חנוכה lights. There are two reasons for this: - a) to publicise the מצוה it should be clear that these lights are for the מצוה and not for personal use and b) since the מצוה occurred with the מנורה in the ביהמ"ק, ביהמ"ק חז"ל gave the חנוכה lights the status of the lights of the מנורה in the ביהמ"ק from which it was forbidden to benefit ס"ס תרע"ג מ"ב ס"ק ח'. Therefore, you may not 'use' the חנוכה lights to enable you to do any activity e.g. to eat, to count money or even to learn, although this is a מצוה. However, you may walk through a room in which the חנוכה lights are burning because the incidental benefit of not tripping over is not considered a 'utilisation' השתמשות of the lights and is therefore permitted, ס"ס תרע"ג מ"ב ס"ק י"א ושע"ה צ"ס ק"ד'.

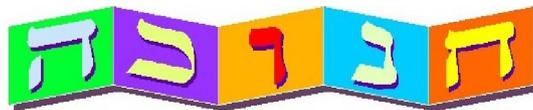
Irrespective of any additional lighting in the room, the accepted מנהג is to kindle for every מנורה in the household an additional light that should be longer or placed higher than or slightly apart from the actual lights of the מצוה so that any potential benefit would be derived from that light and not from the lights of the מצוה. This light is also used as the שמש to light the מנורה, מנורה וצריך, ס"ס תרע"א בה"ל ד"ה וצריך, מנורה שמש. It should be held in that position until most of the light burns on its own accord. One should not light one חנוכה light from another ס"ס תרע"ד ס"א.

3. Position and location Whether one uses oil or candles one should position the lights in a straight even row, not in a circle, so that each flame appears to exist independently and not combined together like a torch, ס"ס תרע"א מ"ב ס"ק י"ד-ט"ז.

The ideal location of the מנורה is at the door way of the house opening onto the main thoroughfare (רשות הרבים) or at the gateway to the courtyard that opens out to the רשות הרבים. If one lives upstairs in a flat and the entrance of one's apartment does not open out to a רשות הרבים then one should light by the window. If this might antagonise non-jewish neighbours or passers by (שעת הסכנה) one should preferably light by the table. In our times, it is not considered safe to light outside but there is no risk in lighting by a window. Therefore our מנהג is to light by a window ס"ס תרע"א ס"ה ומ"ב ס"ק ל"ח.

It is preferable that the מנורה should be positioned between 3 and 10 טפחים from ground level but never higher than 20 אמות from ground level, for example in a mutli-storey apartment block. A טפח is between 3-4" and an אמה between 18-24". Therefore, if you have a choice of lighting at a window above 10 טפחים from ground level or at a window below 10 טפחים from ground level, you should light at the one below 10 טפחים מ"ב, ס"ס תרע"א ס"ו מ"ב ס"ק כ"ו-כ"ח ושע"ה צ"ס ק"ד' ס"ק מ"ב. If the מנורה was lit incorrectly above 20 אמות from ground level one must re-light it in a place below 20 אמות and it does not help to re-position it while it is still alight ס"ס תרע"א ס"ו מ"ב ס"ק ל'.





4. Timing There are various מנהגים regarding the best time to light תנוחילה:-

1. At sunset (הגר"א) שקיעת החמה
2. Just before nightfall (הגר"א) צאת הכוכבים before מעריב, מעריב לא מאחרים
3. After nightfall (in which case you should first daven מעריב because תדיר ושאינו תדיר קודם). 'ס' תרע"ב ס'א"מ"ב ס'ק"א

Whichever מנהג one follows one must ensure that there is adequate oil *at the time of lighting* to last עד שתכלה רגל מן השוק i.e. until half an hour after nightfall:- the time during the times of חו"ל, before the advent of street lighting, when people would no longer walk about in the street 'ס' תרע"ב ס'א"ב 'ורמ"א וס' תרע"ה ס'ב"מ"ב ס'ק"ח

Those who light after nightfall should preferably light as soon as possible within the first half hour קודם when people are still out in the street. Therefore, it is appropriate to prepare the lights in advance 'ס' תרע"ב מ"ב ס'ק"א. If this is not possible one may light all night even until dawn. In these circumstances one should ensure to assemble all members of the household and light in their presence in order to fulfill the requirement of פרסומי ניסא 'ס' תרע"ב ס'ב"מ"ב ס'ק"א

5. Oils and wicks Although one may use all oils, candles and wicks for the תנוכה lights it is preferable מן המובחר to use olive oil and wicks made of cotton or linen. If olive oil is not available it is preferable to use other oils whose lights are clear and pure and the מנהג is to use wax candles because their flame is clear and clean like olive oil, 'ס' תרע"ג ס'א"מ"ב ס'ק"א

6. הדלקה עושה מצוה The primary קיום of the מצוה of נר תנוכה is the lighting of the מנורה. Therefore, if one lit the מנורה properly one has immediately fulfilled one's מצוה. If the lights subsequently went out within the required half an hour one is not required to relight one's מנורה כ"ה, מ"ב ס'ק"א. Nevertheless, it is correct to relight it, particularly on ערב שבת before קבלת שבת, but without a ברכה. This applies only if one lit the מנורה correctly. However, if one lit the מנורה in a windy place or if the wick is faulty so that the flame is not catching and might go out within half an hour one has not fulfilled one's מצוה and one must re-light one's מנורה when it goes out. If it is certain to go out one should even make another ברכה, שעה"צ ס'ק"ל-ל"א

7. ברכות Before lighting on the first night we make three ברכות: 1. להדליק נר של תנוכה 2. שעשה נסים 3. שהחיינו. On all subsequent nights we only say להדליק and שעשה נסים. If one forgot on the first night one may still say it on the second night. If one lit without saying any of the ברכות one may still say them provided one is still involved in lighting that night's lights. Once one has finished lighting one may only say שעשה נסים 'ח-ט'.

8. A traveller If someone is away from home he should light at the place where he sleeps, 'ס' תרע"ז 'ס'א"מ"ב ס'ק"ז 'א-ל"ב

9. ערב שבת On ערב שבת we light the תנוכה נר whilst it is still daytime before sunset but only after פלג המנחה (as shown in Mishono Leshono) and before the שבת candles. It is important to ensure that there is enough oil to burn until half an hour after nightfall. It is preferable to daven מנחה before lighting the מנורה because תפילת מנחה corresponds to the תמיד של בין הערבים and the מנורה corresponds to the מנורה in the ביהמ"ק which was lit later, 'ס' תרע"ט ס'א"מ"ב ס'ק"ב

A man may light the תנוכה lights after the שבת candles as long as he was not מקבל שבת when he lit the שבת candles and it still before sunset. However, a woman may not light the תנוכה lights after lighting her שבת candles. In these circumstances, she should instruct someone else to light the תנוכה lights and make the ברכה להדליק on her behalf; she herself can say שעשה נסים and on the first night שהחיינו 'א, 'ס' תרע"ט ס'א"מ"ב ס'ק"א

On our מוצ"ש מנהג is to light after הבדלה but at least after חוננתנו

10. על הנסים During תנוכה we add על הנסים to every שמ"ע (incl. שבת on מוסף and ר"ח) and to ברכה"מ but not to על המחיה. If one omitted ע"ה one does not repeat שמ"ע or ברכה"מ whether this happened during the week, on שבת or on ר"ח. If one reminded oneself after having said ה' ברוך אתה but before concluding שמ"ע or ברכה"מ, then one should continue and insert before יהיו לרצון or before הרחמן הוא יעשה לנו נסים ונפלאות כמו שעשית לאבותינו בימים ההם בזמן הזה - the following: and then proceed with על הנסים followed by the rest of שמ"ע or ברכה"מ. If one reminded oneself before having said the name of ה' in the ברכה one should go back and say על הנסים 'אוב', על הנסים

