



CHANUKAH

The Kedusha of Chanukah

In the household of the *tzaddik*, Reb Dovid of Tolna, *hadlokas haneirois* was a special event. His chassidim would gather excitedly in his house to take part in the lighting of his golden *menora*, which was an elaborate piece of artistic craftsmanship. One year, on the first night of Chanukah, when the *tzaddik* was ready to light it, he turned to one of his chassidim and said, "Your wife is short, isn't she? When you want to speak to her, what do you do? Do you bend over towards her, or does she raise herself up to your height?" Without waiting for an answer, he recited the *berachos* and lit the *menora*. Needless to say, the chossid and all those present were very puzzled.

During this time, Reb Dovid's great nephew, the *tzaddik*, Reb Mordechai Dov of Hornisteipol, was staying at his home, and seeing the confusion of the chassidim, he explained: The *Gemara* says that "The Shechina does not descend lower than ten *tefachim* from the ground." However, there is an exception to this rule, for the Chanukah *menora* is ideally required to be lower than ten *tefachim*, and it brings the Shechina itself here below. Reb Mordechai concluded by quoting from the *AriZal* that this is the deeper meaning of the words of the *Gemara*, 'If your wife is short, you should bend over and whisper to her.'

The following evening, at the time of *hadlokas haneiros*, Reb Dovid again made some puzzling comment to one of his chassidim. Immediately, though he had not been told of the previous night's explanation, he turned to Reb Mordechai and said, "This time, you will not understand as you did yesterday!"

(סיפורי חסידים זוין מועדים ע' 281)

There was once a man whose mind was severely troubled by constant thoughts of *kefira* and *avoda zara*. Desperate for a remedy, he went to a certain *tzaddik* but was told, "I cannot help you, young man. I would advise you, however, to pay a visit to the *tzaddik*, Reb Shlomo of Karlin. He will help you." The man promptly traveled there, and found the *tzaddik* reciting *pesukim* from *Tehillim*, as was his *minhag* while lighting the *menora*.

When the *tzaddik* came to the *possuk*, "vayifrekeinu mitzareinu ki le'oilom chasdo" ("And He delivered us from our oppressors, for His kindness is everlasting"), he slapped his visitor on the

shoulder and said, "Do you believe that *HaShem* can deliver a man from every *tum'a* and from every *Mitzrayim*?" (For *Mitzrayim* also implies *meitzorim*, the restraints and limitations suffered by the *neschama* in a body.)

At that moment, the man was free of all his disturbing thoughts, and he left – a new man.

(סיפורי חסידים זוין מועדים ע' 281)

The Rebbe explained that Chanukah is an opportune time to increase one's Torah study and *shemiras hamitzvos*, since the *nes* was related to those *ruchniyusdike* matters. One should especially upgrade one's *yiras Shomayim*, for that is the purpose of Torah and *mitzvos*, and that was what the *Yevanim* were particularly opposed to.

This we can learn from the way in which we light an additional candle every night. During Chanukah, one should increase one's contributions to *tzedaka* and study more Torah than usual.

Through the *mitzva* of *neirois* Chanukah, one is granted the light of Torah.

(התועדויות תשמ"ח ח"ב ע' 67, התועדויות תשמ"ד ח"ב ע' 596)

The War of the Yevanim

The goal of the *Yevanim* was "lehashkicham torasecha uleha'aviram meichukei retzonecha" ("to make them forget Your Torah and transgress the decrees of Your will"). As the *Medrash* says, the *Yevanim* demanded the Yidden write that they have no part in *HaShem*. This was a war against *HaShem*. "Let them study Torah," said the Greeks. "Let them practice the *mitzvos*, *mishpatim*, and *eiduyos*, but they must not mention that the Torah is *HaShem's* and that the *mitzvos* are the decrees of His will. Torah and *mitzvos* must be severed from *HaShem*."

(היום יום ב' טבת)

In the time of the *Yevanim*, the *aveiros* of the Yidden were: socializing with the *Yevanim*, studying their culture, desecrating *Shabbos* and *YomTov*, eating *treif*, and not observing the *Yiddische tahara*. The punishment was: the spiritual destruction of the *Beis HaMikdash*, death, and slavery in *golus*. Through *teshuva* and *mesirus nefesh* came the wondrous salvation from *HaShem* – the miracle of Chanukah.

(היום יום כ"ט כסלו)

The Rebbe once explained how the goal of the *Yevanim* and the *misavvim* was to remove the separation that exists between Yidden and *goyim*, and to educate children to be similar to the other nations. This is more severe than placing decrees against the observance of Torah and *mitzvos*, because its effect remains even after the decree is over. It begins with something 'small', through 'lighting up' the way for a child with 'oil' that is contaminated with *goyishkeit*, claiming that it produces the same light. When one educates children improperly, drawing 'light' from a source which is not pure, this leads a child to become a *misavven R'L*.

The lesson from Chanukah is: when lighting up *Yiddische* homes, one must use only pure *Yiddische* light, uncontaminated by any *goyishkeit*. By doing so, with *mesirus nefesh* (not giving in to the majority, who also appear to be stronger), we will be victorious, for *HaShem* is on our side.

(כ"א כסלו תש"מ, לקו"ש ח"כ ע' 438)

At a children's rally the Rebbe pointed out the war against the *Yevanim* in our times. During the time of Chanukah, the Chashmona'im withstood a tremendous challenge, battling a mighty army with *mesirus nefesh*. Today's *nisyonos* are not as formidable, but are of a different nature. The *Yetzer hara* comes to a child and tells him to spend his time playing games like others around him, thus causing him to forget to learn Torah. Or he will try to convince him to eat a candy which others are eating, even though its *kashrus* is uncertain. In such a situation, the child must act strongly, with *mesirus nefesh*, no matter how exciting or enticing the challenge is, and then he will certainly be victorious.

(ז' חנוכה תשל"ח, לקו"ש ח"כ ע' 483)

CONSIDER THIS!

- Why is it specifically the lights of Chanukah that draws the Shechinah below ten *tefachim*? Why did that *kedusha* remove the man's negative thoughts?
- How do we distinguish between "pure *Yiddische* light" and "contaminated *goyishkeit*" when they both incorporate the study of Torah and the observance of *mitzvos*?

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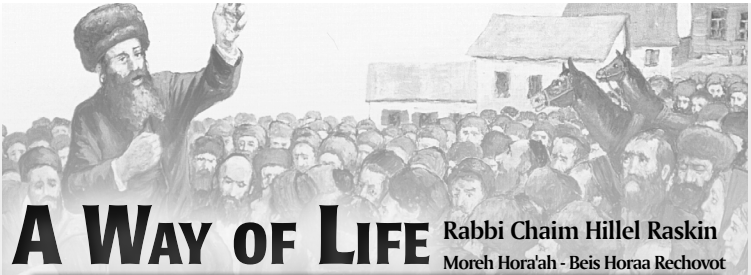


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Rabbi Chaim Hillel Raskin
Moreh Hora'ah - Beis Hora'ah Rechovot

Menorah in Seminary

I am away from home in seminary. Do I need to light my own menorah?

- When a guest in someone's home, one can fulfill the obligation to light *menorah* in several ways: (1) By lighting a separate *menorah*. (2) By contributing with a nominal sum towards the oil and wicks of the householder's *menorah*.¹ (3) The members of guest's household light for him at the guest home.²
- The third option has several limitations: (1) Some contemporary *poskim* hold that this only works between a husband and wife, and not parents for their children, especially when they are living elsewhere.³ (2) If one is in a distant time zone one may not be able to fulfill the obligation with the lighting at home since the time of *menorah* lighting is so different.⁴
- There is a *machlokes* as to whether a guest who eats and sleeps at the home of their host is considered a member of that household and thereby automatically *yotzei* with the *menorah* lighting of the householder.⁵ The Alter Rebbe seems to side with the lenient opinion.⁶
- There is likewise discussion as to the duration of the stay required to make one considered as a member of that household. Some say only a long term boarder.⁷ Others extend it to one who stays for the entire Chanukah,⁸ and others say that sleeping and eating at someone's home for even one night makes one considered a resident, albeit temporarily.⁹
- Our *minhag* is that while boys all try to light their own menorah, girls and women only light when there is no male to light for them.¹⁰ Thus if a family lives in the dormitory building, it is preferable that the girls should be *yotzei* with the man's lighting.
- Although the girls board long-term they aren't considered 'family members' since they pay for their lodgings. Yet, they don't have to participate financially since they have already participated with their tuition.¹¹ When going away for Shabbos girls should *lechatchila* give the householder a small sum to participate, but *bdieved* they are nonetheless *yotzei*.¹²

1. שבת כ"ג ע"א, שו"ע תרע"ז ס"א.
 2. שו"ע תרע"ז ס"א וס"ג.
 3. שו"ת אור נדברו ח"ג סי' נ"ג וחי"א סל"ד. וראה ספר ימי הלל הוודאה עמ' רע"ו-ז'. וראה שו"ת מקדש ישראל תנוכה סי' רל"ז שנוטה להקל, אלא שדעת שו"ע אור"ח סי' רס"ג ס"ט משמע שהשמן שמדליקים בשבילו בביתו צ"ל שלו, ולי"ע האם זה שייך בילד שנסע מביתו לתקופה. (ולהעיר ששם הוא מחלק בן נשוי לבחור בישיבה.) וצ"ע.
 4. המנח"י ח"י סי' מ"ו וכן נט"ג פ"י ס"ד וראה שו"ת מקדש ישראל תנוכה סימן ל"ח מחלוקת בזה ויל"ע.
 5. מג"א ריש סימן תרע"ז. תשו' רש"ל סי' פ"ה.
 6. אור"ח רס"ג ס"ט.
 7. פרמ"ג סי' תרע"ז א"א סק"ג, משנב"ש שם ס"ד ק"ד.
 8. תשובות והנהגות ח"ב סי' קנ"ז. וראה בס' חובת הדר (ס"ק ל"ט).
 9. גינת ורדים גן המלך סימן מ"א ובנוגע שיטת רבינו הזקן יש לעיין בש"י רס"ג ס"ט בנש"ק כתב אדה"ז שמספיק אורח שסמוך על שולחנו לשבת, ולי"ע האם להשוות לעניין נ"ח ובפרט שכמה אחרונים חילקו, וראה לב השבת סי' י"ב.
 10. ספר המנהגים עמ' 69. וראה ספה"ש תש"ן עמ' 194.
 11. ע"פ קצוה"ש סימן ע"ו בבדה"ש ס"ק כ"ב.
 12. גינת ורדים גן המלך סימן מ"א, וכן יש מקום ללמוד בדעת שו"ע ר' כנ"ל.

לע"נ מרת ציפא אסתר בת ר' שלום דובער ע"ה

לזכות החתן אליעזר גרשון וב"ג הנה רחל
אבנן שיחיו
לרגל חתונתם ביום י"א כסלו

OUR HEROES

Reb Chatche Feigin

Reb Yechezkel (Chatche) Feigin was a top *talmid* in Tomchei Temimim in Lubavitch, and was from the group of *bochurim* sent by the Rebbe Rashab in 5672 (1911) to establish the *yeshiva* Toras Emes in Chevron. He married the daughter of Reb Yehuda Leib Tzeitlin of Zhuravitz, and then served as *mashpia* in various branches of Tomchei Tmimim in Russia. Eventually he became the *menahel* of all branches of Tomchei Tmimim. In 5687 (1927), he became the Friedrike Rebbe's personal secretary and *gabai*. From then on Reb Chatche was always at his side — in Russia, Riga and Poland. He was also in charge of fundraising for *maimad* (support for the Rebbe and his activities). He was killed *al kidush Hashem* on 10 Kislev 5702 (1941) in Riga.



During the time of the communist regime, Reb Chatche once *farbrenge*d secretly for the *bochurim*, with one *bochur* standing guard at the door to look out for policemen. Reb Chatche spoke about improving one's *avodas Hashem* while the *bochurim* listened and internalized his words, some even crying. All of a sudden the *bochur* on guard came running in saying that a policeman was approaching. Immediately, each *bochur* jumped into hiding. When the time passed uneventfully, they came out and continued the *farbrenge*n. Reb Chatche implored, "When you heard that danger was near, how come none of you cried?" The *bochurim* explained, "What will our crying help? We need to go hide, not to be caught!" Reb Chatche responded, "So too it is true in regards to *avodas Hashem*: crying won't help. Action needs to be taken to get us out of the mud."

(תשורה צייטלין כ"ד סיון תשע"ג)

In Poltava, there was a Jewish shoemaker who began to keep his shop open on Shabbos. While living there, Reb Chatche once remarked, "Every time I see his store open on Shabbos, my heart is stabbed. We look at him as a *mechalel* Shabbos, but does he really know what Shabbos is? How great and holy the day is? The shoemaker especially doesn't seem to know about its deeper meaning as explained in *Chassidus*. We, on the other hand, learned about Shabbos in *nigleh* and in *Chassidus*, and we have some recognition of its greatness as a holy 24 hours. So if we do not use out fifteen or twenty minutes of this special time for *avodas Hashem*, we are the real *mechalelei* Shabbos!"

(תשורה צייטלין כ"ד סיון תשע"ג)

לע"נ מרת בת' דבורה (נפרטסק) ב"ר אבא הלוי ע"ה לוי' - נלב"ע ח"י כסלו ה'תשס"א

A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

A Conversation with a Shliach

The Rebbe was on his way home, two days before Chanukah, 5734. In the lobby of 770, the Rebbe saw the *shliach* to California, Reb Shlomo Cunin, and asked him how he is preparing for *miytza* Chanukah.

Reb Shlomo answered that he is taking 500 *Menorahs* with him, and there are another five hundred coming in the mail. The Rebbe wondered, "This will suffice for the entire California?"

After Reb Shlomo said he will order more *Menorahs*, the Rebbe asked, "What have you done today for Chanukah?"

Reb Shlomo answered that he had spoken to children about lighting the *Menorah*, however since he didn't have *Menorahs*, only candles, he told them to light on a plate at home. The Rebbe smiled, and said, "They will dirty the plates and their parents will be upset..."

The Rebbe finished the conversation by saying, "It's good that you are sending the *Menorahs* by mail, this way the mailmen will also know about Chanukah!"

לזכות ר' שלום מרדכי הלוי שי' בן רבקה