

## CHANUKAH (I)

### 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 Chanuka, 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 Chanuka *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' 182)

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*, "vayifreineu 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 *מִצְרַיִם* also implies the restraints and limitations suffered by the *neshama* 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' 182)

The Rebbe explained that Chanuka is an opportune time to increase one's Torah study and *shemiras hamitzvos*, since the *nes* was related to those *ruchnijusdike* 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 Chanuka, one should increase one's contributions to *tzedaka* and study more Torah than usual.

Through the *mitzva* of *neiros* Chanuka, one is granted the light of Torah.

(התועודיות תשמ"ח ח"ב ע' 76, התועודיות תשמ"ד ח"ב ע' 695)

### 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 *teshuvah* and *mesirus nefesh* came the wondrous salvation from *HaShem* – the miracle of Chanuka.

(היום יום כ"ט כסלו)

In a *sicha* (כ"א כסלו תש"מ), the Rebbe explained how the goal of the *Yevanim* and the *misayavim* 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 *tahor*, this leads a child to become a *Misyaven* (ר"ל).

The lesson from Chanuka 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.

(לקו"ש ח"כ ע' 834)

In a *sicha* to children (ז' חנוכה תשל"ח), the Rebbe spoke of the war against the *Yevanim* in our times. During the time of Chanuka, 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.

(לקו"ש ח"כ ע' 384)

### CONSIDER THIS!

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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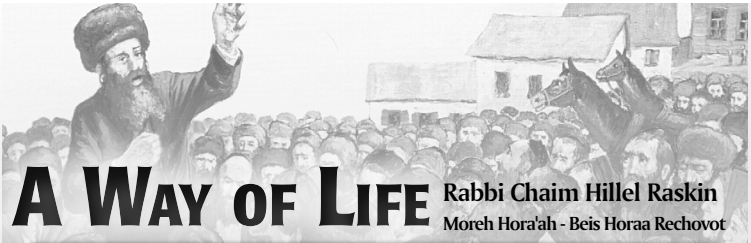
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# A WAY OF LIFE

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

## Time for Lighting

I want to leave on *mitzvoin* in the evening. When should I light *menorah*?

- Chazal set the time for lighting Chanukah *menorah* "from after the sun sets until people leave the market place."<sup>1</sup> The Gemara offers two interpretations, both of which are accepted in *halacha*: (1) *When* one should light, (2) *How long* the candles must burn.
- *Rishonim* are divided as to whether the start time is *shkia* (the beginning of sunset)<sup>2</sup> or *tzeis hakochavim* (the conclusion of sunset).<sup>3</sup> *Halacha* follows the later time,<sup>4</sup> nonetheless the *minhag Chabad* is to fulfill both practices by lighting straightaway after *shkia* and allowing the candles burn for half an hour into after *tzeis* (in total over 50 minutes).<sup>5</sup>
- Early *poskim* defined the end time as half an hour later.<sup>6</sup> Nowadays, when many people roam the streets long into the night, some write that one may light as long as there are people outside.<sup>7</sup>
- In recent centuries the custom developed to light the *menorah* indoors. Some *poskim* write that wherever this is the case the *pirsumei nisa* is for the family members, and not for the people on the street. Thus, one may *lechatchila* light late as long as family members are awake.<sup>8</sup> On the other hand, if the family members are asleep, one should wake them, unless the *menorah* will be visible to passersby. If there are no family members and it is after the first half the night (*chatzos*), he should light without a *bracha*.<sup>9</sup> Some *acharonim* hold that the entire night is time for lighting and one can light until sunrise with a *bracha*.<sup>10</sup>
- Even according to the lenient opinions one should not unnecessarily delay lighting *menorah* for several reasons: (1) *Zerizin makdimim lemitzvos* – one should fulfil any *mitzvah* at the earliest available opportunity.<sup>11</sup> (2) Chazal established the time for lighting *menorah* at the beginning of the night.<sup>12</sup> (3) To enable passerby to see the *menorah*.<sup>13</sup> (4) All family members can participate and fulfill their *mitzvah*.<sup>14</sup>
- In practice: For all the above mentioned reasons one should *lechatchilah* light at the beginning of the night. *Bedieved* one may light with a *bracha* until *chatzos* or as long as others are around. Otherwise one should think the *bracha* but not pronounce it.<sup>15</sup>

1. שבת כ"א ע"ב.
2. ר"ן ורשב"א שם.
3. המורדכי שבת פ"ב סי' תנ"ה. וראה מג"א א"ח סי' תרע"ב.
4. שו"ע א"ח סי' תרע"ב ס"א. וראה ת"מ סה"מ מלוקט כסלו ד"ה מצותה תשל"ח הע"ג.
5. ראה ס' המנהגים חב"ד ע' 70, 71 (אג"ק ח"י ע' קנ"ג). וזה גם פותר הענין של הדלקה לפני מעריב או אחריו בזה שמדליקים לפני זמן צאה"כ בין מנחה למעריב (וראה ביה"ל שו"ע א"ח סי' תרע"ב ס"א ד"ה לא מאחרים).
6. ביה"ל סי' תרע"ב ד"ה ובלבד שיתן. ולהעיר שלפי השיטות שתחילת הזמן הוא בשקיעה אי"כ זמן הזה הוא חצי שעה אחר שקיעה.
7. שו"ע שם ס"ב. ולהעיר ממשמעות הרמב"ם הל' חנוכה פ"ד ה"ה שגם כיום אין להדליק אחרי הזמן. רמ"א א"ח שם ס"ב.
8. משנ"ב סי' תרע"ב סק"א, נט"ג פ"ג סט"ו. וראה מהרש"ל סי' פ"ה שלדעתו הזמן הקובע בכל מקרה זהו חצות.
9. משמעות השו"ע ס"ב. וראה פ"ח ש"ח הוא דבר שמצוותו בלילה שכשר כל הלילה. וראה שעה"צ שם סק"ז באריכות שמכריע שלא לברך, אלא שהנהוג לברך אין מוחין בידו.
10. ערוה"ש א"ח סי' תרע"ב ס"ו.
11. ר"ן שבת ט ע"א ד"ה דא"י.
12. ביה"ל שם ד"ה ומכל מקום.
13. מנהגי מהר"ל – חנוכה.
14. ראה שו"ע"ר סי' קפ"ה ס"ג. והמברך יש לו על מיי לסמוך כנ"ל.

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

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# OUR HEROES

## Reb Dovid Leikes



Reb Dovid Leikes, one of the great *talmidim* of the Baal Shem Tov, is mentioned in many of the stories which are told about the Baal Shem Tov. He was a grandfather to many *chasidische* Rebbes, such as Reb Yitzchak of Skver, and he was the father-in-law of Reb Motel Tchernobler. He served as the *rov* in the town Bar in the Podolye region.



The Baal Shem Tov was once in the home of Reb Dovid during the time when a terrible decree had been enacted that the Talmud be burned. A day was set for the public burning of all volumes of Gemoro and the decree stated that anyone caught learning the Talmud after this event, would be burned together with the volume he was learning. On the scheduled day, Reb Dovid took a Gemoro, hid behind a large urn (used for heating water) and, as he usually did each day, engrossed himself in learning. The Baal Shem Tov, meanwhile, paced around the house, entirely immersed in his holy thoughts.

At twelve o'clock, the church bells began ringing wildly, notifying all that the time for the enactment of the decree had come. The Baal Shem Tov continued pacing despite the tumultuous ringing and gathering of spectators. Seeing this, Reb Dovid, could contain himself no longer and mustered up the courage to approach the Baal Shem Tov. "Rebbe! How could you be silent at a time like this?!" The Baal Shem Tov looked up at his *talmid* and said, "The fire you displayed for the learning of Torah has extinguished their fire." Sure enough, one thing led to another and the decree was abolished.



Towards the end of Reb Dovid's life, as he neared the age of one hundred, the other *dayanim* of the city began handling the easier *shaalos*, but he would still be consulted with regarding the difficult matters that arose. On what was to be Dovid's last day, a difficult question presented itself to the Beis Din and the *dayanim* wanted to consult with him. Reb Dovid's family, however, refused to let him be disturbed, being that he was very weak.

Hearing the argument taking place outside, the *tzaddik* gathered all the strength he had and got out of bed. He called for his family, and when they came in, he banged fiercely on the table, so strongly that one of its legs fell off, and cried, "It says that any *dayan* who judges a *din* truthfully takes this partnership away from me?! All the *dayanim* should come in at once!" The *dayanim* came in and he guided them, helping them reach the solution of the issue at hand. Soon after, Reb Dovid passed away.

# A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

## A Lubavitcher Shul

*Beis Torah U'beis Tefillah* (House of Study and Prayer) — this was the phrase used by the Rebbe to describe the *shul* at 770 almost every time it was mentioned.

The Rebbe likewise demanded all Lubavitcher *shuls* to serve not only as a place of *davening*, or as a classic American "synagogue," but rather as a center of Torah learning.

*Harav* Tuvia Blau, the founder and *rov* of the Chabad *shul* in the Sanhedria neighborhood of Yerushalayim, had a personal *yechidus* in Tishrei 5728 (1967). He heard the following words from the Rebbe:

"Every *shul* must have a *shiur* Torah on a daily basis.

"Moreover, a *shul* which has a connection to our holy *Rebbeim* is obligated to also have a *shiur* in Chassidus every day."

(*Heichal Menachem*, Vol. 1, p. 221)

In honor of Moshe and Shaina Kramer and the birth of their son - The Epstein family