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DAY-TO-DAY HALACHIC GUIDE

Laws & Customs for
Chanukah 5783

Also:
19-20 Kislev, 5 Teves & 10 Teves

Year of Hakhel

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 Under the auspices of Horav Yosef Yeshaya Braun, shlita
 Member of the Badatz of Crown Heights

B"H

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Year of Hakhel

By
Horav Yosef Yeshaya Braun, shlita
member of the Badatz of Crown Heights

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FOREWORD

We present a comprehensive guidance with laws and customs associated with Yud-Tes Kislev, the days of Chanukah, Hey Teves and Asarah B'Teves 5783. The details are derived from multiple sources, revised by Rabbi **M. M. Rotenberg**.

Due to a dearth of space only some references and halachic notes have been added. Primary sources include: *Shulchan Aruch* and commentaries, *Sefer HaMinhagim Chabad*, *Luach Colel Chabad*, *Sichos* and *Igros Kodesh*. Please see the footnotes in the Hebrew section for more halachic discussion of the topics mentioned.

The intention of this summary is to inform you of some of the relevant laws, not to replace each person's obligation to review the Halachos comprehensively.

Please note: Specific laws are mentioned only the first time that they become relevant, although they may apply to subsequent dates as well.

* * *

TIME TO PREPARE

In a *sichah* on the second day of Rosh Hashanah 5752, the Rebbe states:

"We need to focus on studying the laws that apply to this time of year, during which many changes are made to the standard prayers and there are numerous customs that apply. We should make certain to study these laws in the Code of Jewish Law.

"Recently, yearly calendars have begun to include many of the laws that apply to the relevant time of the year and that are necessary to know. This is particularly useful for those who, for whatever reason, do not have sefarim or do not know how to find what they are looking for in the sefarim that they own. Now, however, they can simply examine such calendars and easily find the relevant laws.

"It is therefore extremely appropriate for every single person to peruse the contents of these calendars, such as the Kollel Chabad calendar (available both in wall size and pocket size formats) in such a manner that the laws that apply to this time of year will become fixed in his memory. After all, it sometimes happens that a halachic question arises precisely at a point during which it is forbidden to interrupt and ask for someone's guidance—or when there is nobody around to ask. Furthermore [not having familiarized himself with the relevant laws beforehand], it can happen that one does not even realize that there is a problem to begin with."

* * *

YEAR OF HAKHEL

WHAT IS HAKHEL?

Once every seven years, on the second day of Sukkos that immediately follows the conclusion of a Shemittah year, the entire nation—men, women, and children—gather at the *Beis Hamikdash* and hear the king read aloud from the Torah. This

incredible setting is compared to the receiving of the Torah on Mount Sinai and inspires all present with commitment, love, and awe of Hashem. This mitzvah is known as Hakhel, “assembly” of the Jewish nation. Moshiach himself will read from the Torah in the third Beis Hamikdash each Hakhel year—may we merit his coming immediately!

THE REBBE ON HAKHEL

The Rebbe calls attention to the concept of Hakhel to an extraordinary degree and with increasing intensity, to the point that his *sichos* and letters are filled with Hakhel-related directives. Hakhel is not limited to Sukkos. It remains a timely and urgent concept throughout a Hakhel year. We are expected to raise awareness of Hakhel at every possible opportunity and in every possible way, to draw associations between all our activities and the “call of the hour”—Hakhel. Leading by example, the Rebbe went to unusual lengths to draw such associations in his many *sichos*.

During Simchas Torah 5748, the Rebbe called for a Hakhel, assembly, of literature on Hakhel, meaning that information from all relevant Torah sources on the concept of Hakhel should be published in a single volume. It was to include teachings from *Nigleh* and especially from the inner dimensions of Torah, primarily as those teachings are explained in Chassidus. The goal of the volume would be identical to the goal of an actual Hakhel experience: to inspire the people to greater fear and awe of Hashem.

On Shabbos Mishpatim 5741, the Rebbe called for studying the “laws of Hakhel.” It is an obligation to study the laws of each festival every year thirty days in advance of the actual festival. We should similarly study the spiritual laws of Hakhel as they are recorded in the Torah teachings of Mussar, Chassidus, and Kabbalah.

It is not the purpose of this publication, nor is it within its scope, to record all the relevant information on Hakhel, but we have made an effort to include snippets of relevant material wherever appropriate, culled from *sichos* that the Rebbe delivered at farbrengens in 770—or, to borrow a phrase from the laws of Hakhel, that “the king would read ... on a wooden platform in the courtyard of the *Beis Hamikdash*.” This is no substitute for the need to study the topic from the original sources. The Rebbe’s *sichos* and letters on the matter are incredibly extensive.¹

* * *

This guide incorporates several reminders about laws that will only be applicable during the Era of Redemption, with the hope that Moshiach will come speedily, allowing us to implement these laws in practice.

This year, a Hakhel year, bears a special connection to Moshiach. The Navi Yirmiyahu foretells that at the time of the Final Redemption, “A great gathering (*kahal*, akin to *hakhel*) will return here.” Hakhel is an event led by the Jewish king—a scion of *Beis*

1) For more on Hakhel, see *Kovetz Hakhel* published by Vaad Lehafatzas Sichos in 5755; *Kahal Gadol* (*Otzeros Mitzvas Hakhel*), republished this year by Mamash; *Encyclopedia Talmudis*, entry “Hakhel”; *Hakhel* (*Kovetz leMitzvas Hakhel u’Birurei Hilchoseha*), authored by Rabbi Eliyahu Dovid Rabinowitz-Teomim in Yerushalayim, published in 5706 and 5733; *Sefer Hakhel* (*Mitzvas Hakhel – Asufas maamarim*), published by Machon Hatorah Veha’aretz in 5761.

Dovid, and therefore, at our Hakhels of the Future, Melech Hamoshiach himself will preside and read from the Torah to inspire the entire, rehabilitated Jewish Nation, speedily in our days.²

The concept of studying these halachos is based on several *sichos*, some of which are quoted below:

TO REALIZE REDEMPTION

“Hashem **begs** the Jewish people,” the Rebbe passionately stated, “to occupy themselves with the study of the laws of the sacrificial orders ... which [as our Sages state] is considered as if we had actually offered the sacrifices. This study will bring about the actual offerings because it brings [to quote the Rambam] ‘King Moshiach [who] will build the Beis Hamikdash ... and restore the laws of the Torah ... so that the Jewish people will again offer the sacrifices ... in accordance with all the mitzvos that are stated in the Torah,’ speedily, in our time—literally! [Then, to quote the festival liturgy] ‘We will offer before You there the offerings of our obligations ... in accordance with the commandments of Your will.’”³

“We must experience greater longing and yearning for the Redemption,” the Rebbe demanded. “One of the ways this is accomplished is through studying more Torah on the subjects of the Redemption and the Beis Hamikdash. Studying these topics greatly hastens their actual realization, to the extent that we will go directly from studying these subjects to greet our righteous Moshiach. We will inform him, ‘We have just completed studying the laws associated with your coming!’ An additional motivation to study these laws is that we must expect Moshiach’s arrival each and every day. In that case, these laws [concerning the Redemption and the Beis Hamikdash] are matters that every Jew—men and women alike—must know in order to put them into practical use on a daily basis, such as many of the laws of the offerings.”⁴

* * *

General Note: The times listed below are for Crown Heights only. Since one can never achieve complete precision, and many factors may influence the accuracy of these times, it is recommended to begin earlier than the time listed and not wait until the last minute (e.g., for the start of Shabbos), or to wait extra time, when that is the appropriate precaution (e.g., at the close of Shabbos).

MONDAY, 18 KISLEV

Tachanun is not recited during Minchah.

²) Many *sichos* discuss this connection more broadly and deeply. Some of them will be mentioned later in the booklet.

³) *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 18, p. 341 – Emphasis in original

⁴) from a *sichah* addressed to N’shei Ubnos Chabad – Sefer Hasichos 5750, vol. 2, p. 485

Today is the *yahrtzeit* of the *tzaddik* Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak of Avrutch—the great-grandfather of the Previous Rebbe.

Today's entry in *Hayom Yom* is its last, and is followed by a festive greeting:

Gut Yom Tov! May you be inscribed and sealed for a good year in the study of Chassidus and in following the ways of Chassidus!

In numerous *sichos*, the Rebbe discusses extending this greeting in the Hebrew singular (*tikaseiv*, not *tikaseivu*) when greeting an individual.

In *Igros Kodesh* (and similarly in numerous other sources), the Rebbe states: "I suggest that on the first night, the eve of Yud-Tes Kislev, you should conduct *farbrengens* in many different locations. Inform people in those events of the next day's grand *farbrengen*. Then, on the next evening, the eve of the twentieth of Kislev, gather in one location for a grand *farbrengen*."

Lu'ach Colel Chabad notes: "In every city, *Anash* gathers with feasts and joy, thanking G-d for this big miracle. The day is also commemorated by the conclusion of the Talmud in every community of Chassidim and the division of its study for the following year. The intent is that every person resolves to study a tractate of the Talmud with the intent of finishing it by Yud-Tes Kislev of the following year. It is also the day when the annual cycle of the study of the *Tanya*, as ordained by the Previous Rebbe, is begun anew."

There are many *sichos* that refer to this occasion of completing the entire Sefer Hatanya.

Many years, the Rebbe would send public letters and telegrams in honor of Yud-Tes Kislev. Two such letters that also marked the celebration in a Hakhel year are from 5727 and 5748.

TUESDAY, 19 KISLEV

Chag Hageulah, Rosh Hashanah of Chassidus

Tachanun is not recited today.

Today is the 250th *yahrtzeit* of the Maggid of Mezritch. He passed away on Tuesday in the week of *Parshas Vayeishev* (as it falls out this year)—19 Kislev, 5533 (1772). He is buried in Anipoli.

Today is the anniversary of the Alter Rebbe's release from his first imprisonment. He was freed on Tuesday in the week of *Parshas Vayeishev* (as it falls out this year)—toward the evening of 19 Kislev, 5559 (1798).

Today is the anniversary of the rescue of the Alter Rebbe's son, Harav Moshe. He was saved on the eve of 19 Kislev, 5576.

The Rebbe would often explain a special significance of a commemoration when the day of the week is identical to the original historical occurrence. Yud-Tes Kislev

this year falls on a Tuesday, just like the Alter Rebbe's release on Tuesday, Yud-Tes Kislev, 5559 (1798). The same occurred in 5752, which the Rebbe discusses in the *sichah* of *Parshas Vayishlach* 5752.⁵

A DAY OF FARBRENGEN

Yud-Tes Kislev is a day of *farbrengen* and taking on positive resolutions to fix times for the public study of Torah and Chassidus and for strengthening observance of the ways of Chassidus—in a spirit of true brotherhood and friendship.

“It is obvious that today's study should begin with topics that are timely,” the Rebbe instructed on the eve of Yud-Tes Kislev 5749, “teachings that explain the concept of this day (the laws of the day, so-to-speak). Begin with the words of the Rebbe that are printed in the introduction to *Hayom Yom*.”

The introduction to *Hayom Yom* reads as follows:

Yud-Tes Kislev is the festival on which “He redeemed our soul in peace,” and the light and vitality of our souls were granted to us. This day is the Rosh Hashanah for the teachings of Chassidus, which our holy forbears bequeathed to us, i.e., the teachings of the Baal Shem Tov.

“This day is the beginning of Your works,” the fulfillment of the Divine intention underlying the creation of man in this world—to elicit a revelation of the light of our holy Torah's innermost dimension.

On this day, that light is elicited in a comprehensive manner for the whole year. It is our duty on this day to awaken our hearts, the very core of our hearts, with an inward and elemental desire and will—that G-d illuminate our souls with the light of the innermost [mystical] dimension of His Torah.

“From out of the depths I called to You, G-d,” to elicit the depths and inwardness of His Torah and mitzvos from the inwardness and Essence of the Infinite Light, so that it will illuminate the innermost reaches of our souls. Our entire being (i.e. our total existence, compromising its essence and extensions) will thereby be devoted to Him alone, banishing from us any natural traits that are evil or despicable. Rather, all our actions and affairs (both in our *avodah*, i.e. davening and Torah and mitzvos, and in the worldly undertakings that are needed to maintain the body) will be sincerely motivated by the cause of Heaven, as G-d wishes.

May G-d the Merciful Father show us compassion and lead us along the good and righteous path and thus “the righteous shall behold His Countenance.”

PERSONAL FARBRENGENS

On *Parshas Vayishlach* 5752, the Rebbe instructed that “in order to strongly emphasize that every person is also a *mashpia*, it is appropriate for each person to host their own *farbrengen*. They should *farbreng* with themselves, with all

⁵) See *Sefer Hasichos* 5752 vol. 1, p. 155 ff.

ten powers of their soul. They should *farbreng* with their family. And they should *farbreng* with friends and acquaintances. As it is stated (regarding the Redemption), “*He will return the hearts of fathers to the sons and the hearts of sons to their fathers.*” ... Ideally, each person should participate in three *farbrengens* (establishing a *chazakah*). They should personally attend one *farbrengen* and have representatives attend two others, if all three are held simultaneously.”

TANYA ANEW

We begin the new yearly cycle in the study of the daily Tanya portion of Chitas. This Yud-Tes Kislev, the cycle division utilized is the one for a regular year (*Shana Peshuta*).

TUESDAY NIGHT, EVE OF 20 KISLEV

Chag Hageulah, Rosh Hashanah of Chassidus

In numerous *sichos*, the Rebbe states that the main *farbrengens* and large-scale events should be held on the night following *Yud-Tes Kislev*, i.e., on the eve of *Chof Kislev*.

For Yud-Tes Kislev-related *sichos* from the calendar sequence identical to the present year, refer to the following years: 5711; 5712; 5715; 5725; 5729; 5732; 5735; 5738; 5742; 5749; 5752.

Farbrengen tonight in 770 at 9:00 pm.

WEDNESDAY, 20 KISLEV

Chag Hageulah, Rosh Hashanah of Chassidus

Tachanun is not recited today.

The Book of Ezra records that at the start of the era of the Second *Beis Hamikdash*, “*on the twentieth day of the ninth month*”—*Chof Kislev* in the year 3414—upon the return to *Eretz Yisrael* of the Jews who were exiled to Babylon, that “*all the people of Yehudah and Binyamin assembled.*”⁶ At this grand assembly (*farbrengen*), *Ezra Hasofer* inspired the people to return to Hashem through genuine *teshuvah*.

Today is the anniversary of the first printing of the Tanya, which occurred on Tuesday, 20 Kislev, 5557 (1796), at the printing house in Slavita.

The Previous Rebbe revealed in a letter that in the year 5558, the Alter Rebbe instructed the Chassidim to apply themselves diligently to the study of Tanya, and that on the Shabbos that coincides with *Chof Kislev*, every community of Anash should study two chapters from the first part of Tanya and one chapter from its

⁶ Ezra 10:9. [In Hebrew: י,ט—perhaps an allusion to *Yud-Tes Kislev*.]

second part. The Previous Rebbe concludes that this was an enigma (*va'yihee l'peleh*) in the eyes of Chassidim.⁷

THURSDAY, 21 KISLEV

It is recorded that in the days of Shimon *Hatzaddik*, Chof-Alef Kislev is the day that Har Gerizim, a stronghold of the Samaritan tribe (who brought many troubles on the Jews of the Second Temple Era), was plowed over. To commemorate this day as one of minor celebration, eulogies were not given. The Rebbe talks about the significance of the differing accounts of the event and its lessons.⁸

FRIDAY, 22 KISLEV

Shulchan Aruch states that although a person hears the entire Torah read in shul on Shabbos morning, he also needs to read it himself every week in the manner of *shnayim mikra ve'echad targum* (we recite twice each verse and once the commentary of Onkelos). It is customary to do this Friday after *chatzos* (midday). It is best to ensure that the reading has been completed before starting the Shabbos morning meal, and preferably even before the start of Shacharis.

Check your pockets on *erev Shabbos* before the onset of Shabbos. This is especially important for those who wore these same Shabbos-Yom Tov garments earlier this week in honor of Yud-Tes and Chof Kislev.

Candle lighting at 4:11 pm.

SHABBOS PARSHAS VAYESHEV, 23 KISLEV

Shabbos Mevorchim Teves

Early Shabbos morning, the entire book of Tehillim is read.

TEFILOS & FARBRENGEN

After the reading of the Torah, the blessing over the coming month of Teves is recited. This month, the *molad* will occur on Friday morning, at 11:12 am, and 9/18 of a minute.

Rosh Chodesh Teves will be on Shabbos and Sunday. During blessing of the new month, we say: *Rosh Chodesh Teves, b'yom hashabbos kodesh ul'macharaso b'yom harishon...*

Av harachamim is not recited before Musaf, however *Tzidkasecha tzedek* is recited during Minchah, as on an ordinary Shabbos.

Today is a day to *farbreng*.

7) For elaboration, see *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 25, pg. 200 f. 72

8) In Megillah Taanis (In the Talmud [Yuma 69a], the date given is 25 Teves). See the *sichah* of *Shabbos Parshas Vayeshev*, 21 Kislev, 5745 (Hisva'aduyos p. 905ff.)

HAKHEL & YOSEF'S DREAMS

The Rebbe explains⁹ that this week's *parshah* is associated with Hakhel: The *parshah* begins, "Yaakov dwelt in the land of *megurei aviv*—his father's sojourning." The term *megurei* has alternative meanings: "It means to assemble and gather, as in *ogeir bakayitz*, 'harvests in the summer'¹⁰." Also, "*Megurei* means *yirah*, fear or awe, and it also refers to an *otzar*, treasure ... *yiras Hashem hi otzaro*, 'fear of Hashem—that is [man's] treasure'.¹¹ [The multiple implications of *megurei*] correspond to the concept of Hakhel—the assembly and gathering of the entire Jewish nation ... "so that you shall fear Hashem your G-d all of the days."

The association with Hakhel appears more specifically in Yosef's dreams:

1) "Behold, we were binding sheaves ... your sheaves encircled and prostrated themselves to my sheaf".¹² This represents the ingathering and assembly of all twelve tribes—similar to the concept of *Vayakhel Moshe*, "Moshe assembled the nation," "When the heads of the nation gathered; the tribes of Israel in unity"—through a sense of self-nullification demonstrated by prostration and so on.

2) "Behold, the sun, the moon, and eleven stars were prostrating themselves to me".¹³ The prostration and sense of subservience is felt by the entire nation—the men (symbolized by the sun), the women (symbolized by the moon), and the children (represented by the stars). This is similar to Hakhel - "Assemble the nation, the men, the women, and the children ... to fear Hashem your G-d."

At the conclusion of the above *sichah*, the Rebbe calls for "an increase in matters of Hakhel and *simchah* in fulfillment of the prophecies, 'You will be gathered one by one, sons of Israel' and 'A great multitude shall return here,' and '[There will be] eternal gladness upon their heads.'"

Shabbos ends at 5:16 pm.

CHANUKAH PREPARATIONS

WHAT TYPE OF FUEL?

The menorah may not be lit with oil that is repulsive or causes a foul smell, or with oil that is spiritually repellent due to its having been acquired through theft.¹⁴

9) Sefer Hasichos 5748, vol. 1, p. 164, fn. 90

10) *Mishlei* 10:5

11) *Yeshayah* 33:6

12) 37:7

13) v. 9

14) Regarding stolen oil: It is a halachic principle that *mitzvah haba'ah ba'aveirah*, a mitzvah that is accomplished through violating a prohibition, is invalid and not considered a mitzvah at all. It is important to note that oil that is borrowed without permission is considered stolen.

Some authorities maintain that the materials used for the menorah must be the absolute property of its owner. (See extensive references and notes in the Hebrew version of this publication.) According to this view, borrowing such materials is not an option. Thus, the buyer needs to physically lift the materials or draw them toward himself to fully acquire them according to the halachic principle of *kinyan* (or pay for the oil which

The best way to perform the mitzvah of kindling the Chanukah lights is to obtain olive oil because it produces a pure, clear and steady flame, it is easily drawn by the wick, and it was the fuel with which the miracle of the Chanukah originally occurred.

All other types of oil are also fine to use in a Chanukah menorah, except on Shabbos Chanukah (there are conflicting opinions about the kinds of oil permitted on Shabbos). Nevertheless, it is a greater mitzvah to use oils that offer pure, clean lights.

Buyers beware! Fake olive oil is currently being sold in stores. The bogus oil is more yellow, less bitter and runnier than actual olive oil, and gives off an unpleasant smell when lit. When heated, olive oil will emit a strong olive smell, but will not bubble or foam when used for frying and does not smoke. It is easy to tell a fake by placing a sample in the fridge alongside a sample of genuine olive oil. The olive oil will become thicker and stickier than the fake. It is better not to rely on this experimental evidence, but to purchase oil that is verified as 100 olive oil by a reputable certification agency.

Notice: This year directly follows a Shemita year. As a result, olive oil recently produced in Israel being sold on the market may fall under the constraints of fruit grown during Shemita. There is debate among the halachic authorities as to whether such oil may be used for lighting the *menorah*. The use of Shemita produce under a loophole known a *heter mechirah* is also a matter of debate.¹⁵ Someone who wishes to be stringent should avoid olive oil which has these concerns.

Other *hiddurim* (enhancements) relating to the olive oil include using a product that is extra virgin (and not labeled “pomace,” which includes pulp), food-grade (although be aware that oil of this caliber may be marked “for lighting” so as not to be subjected to a food tax) and liquid (not congealed or frozen). This is because the purer and more virgin the product, the better it is for the mitzvah.¹⁶

Candles: For those purchasing the small cardboard boxes of ubiquitous, colored-wax Chanukah candles, be aware that these candles are designed to burn only the minimum half-hour required by halachah. Since many cheap menoros are fashioned with candle slots that are close together, these candles can burn out in even less than thirty minutes on Night Two and on as the heat of nearby flames

also qualifies as a *kinyan* when required for the proper fulfillment of a mitzvah). Accordingly, one who wishes to fulfill the menorah obligation with someone else’s lighting—an individual who is not part of their own household—must give that individual at least a minimum sum of money to formally acquire a share of the materials. Some opinions further require that the oil being lit should be of sufficient quantity as to include a *prutah*’s worth for each of the participants who are relying on that oil for the mitzvah.

¹⁵ See sources referenced in *Shi’urim BaHalachah*, 139:4, and in *Kuntras Basra* (in manuscript form); as well as *Sha’alos u’Teshuvos Mishnas Yosef*, vol. 1, 21; and elsewhere.

¹⁶ In recent years, this concept has given rise to significant debate. Note, however, that the strong preference for the purest oil is explicitly recorded in *Kuntras Seder HaDlakas Neir Chanukah* that was authored by Rabbi Yitzchak Sagi-Nahor, the son of the *Ra’avad*.

melt the wax at a faster rate—and imperfections in the production process can cause them to go out before the half hour is up even on the first night. As we will discuss further in the halachos of lighting, we are generally stringent to set the Chanukah lights to burn a full fifty minutes, so buy longer candles to fulfill the mitzvah in a manner of *hiddur*. When purchasing for small children, or for *mitvzoim* purposes in cases where the menorah will definitely be lit after nightfall, you may be lenient with the minimal-sized candles (since it can be projected that at least one flame will remain lit for the obligatory half-hour). However, when the candles will be lit before dark, and especially on *erev Shabbos* when they **must** be kindled by *shki'ah* time, provide longer candles that will burn until at least a half-hour after nightfall.

It is the Chabad custom to use a beeswax candle for the *shamash*.

WHAT ABOUT THE WICKS?

The best way to perform the mitzvah is to obtain cotton wool or linen thread for wicks. Some have the *hiddur* of using only untreated wicks, so that the first light should be from the burning oil and not the wax that coats the wicks. Any other type of material is also fine. (Some coat their wicks in oil or singe them in preparation for lighting. The thickness and placement of the wicks should be taken into consideration, so that the light continues to burn for the appropriate amount of time.)

AND THE RECEPTACLE?

According to halachah, a wax candle is considered to be a wick in a wax container. Technically, there is no need to insert the candle into a holder—a menorah. Nevertheless, Chazal instructed that mitzvos be performed in a beautiful manner, in the spirit of *zeh Keili ve'anveihu* ("This is my G-d and I will glorify Him") and this instruction extends to the Rabbinic mitzvah of Chanukah. It is therefore important to obtain a beautiful menorah, ideally made of metal. Those who can afford it should obtain a menorah made of precious metal such as silver, all for the greater splendor of the mitzvah. (Some extend this *hiddur* and do not use glass cups in their menorah so that the lights are contained within the silver vessel itself.)

In *Likkutei Sichos*, the Rebbe states, "There is basis for suggesting that menoros that are designed for use on Chanukah should be fashioned with straight, diagonal branches...why change the true design of the original menorah, whose branches were diagonal and not curved?"¹⁷

WHO LIGHTS?

The Rambam writes: "The Chanukah lights are an extremely precious mitzvah.

17) vol. 21, p. 169, note 44

Be extra careful in observing this mitzvah, in order to publicize the miracle and to praise G-d and thank Him for the miracles that He performed for us.”

Men and women are equally obligated in the mitzvah of kindling the Chanukah lights. Even a pauper who survives on *tzedakah* is expected to sell their garment if needed to purchase oil for their menorah.

A household member may fulfill their obligation through the menorah that is lit by the head of their household. In that case, listen to the blessing and respond *Amen*, but do not respond *Baruch hu uvaruch shemo*.

TRAVEL PLANS

While it seems logical that someone who does not have a home is not obligated to purchase or rent a home for the sake of observing this mitzvah,¹⁸ nevertheless, it is equally obvious that due to the preciousness of the mitzvah, we should not cause it to be neglected deliberately. Therefore, **if you intend to travel, organize your schedule in advance so that you will be able to personally light the menorah at its proper time in your own living quarters.** It is a far greater mitzvah to personally light the menorah rather than delegate it to an emissary.

In fact, some halachic authorities advise that someone who purchased air tickets and the like with an itinerary that prevents the kindling of the menorah should cancel the tickets—even if doing so inflicts considerable monetary loss. In actual practice, a Rav should be consulted for guidance.

A guest should light the menorah wherever they are staying. However, if that location will no longer be considered their living quarters during the halachic time for lighting—for example, if someone permanently leaves one temporary location immediately after lighting, and now travels elsewhere—there is grave doubt as to whether they have fulfilled their obligation. If they will return home late at night, even after midnight, then the best option by far is to personally light the menorah at home upon returning (provided that another member of the household will be awake and present to observe the lighting).

18) There is actually a halachic debate regarding the need to buy or rent a home for the sake of this mitzvah. Some have pointed to the words of Rambam: “There are positive commandments for which one is obligated to try to fulfill and actively pursue them ... these are referred to as *chovah*, because one is obligated to find a way to fulfill them, one way or another. Then there are mitzvos that are not obligatory and are comparable to *reshus*, optional instructions. Take, for example, the mitzvos of mezuzah and *ma’akeh* [fencing an open rooftop]. One is not obligated to live in a house that meets the requirements for a mezuzah just in order to put up a mezuzah. If he wishes, he may spend his entire life living in a tent or on a ship. Nor must he build a home just in order to erect a fence along its roof ... Then there are [non-biblical] mitzvos that are obligatory according to Rabbinical decree, such as kindling the Chanukah lights.” A similar deduction can be made from the words of Tosefos Sukkah 46a, s.v. *haro’eh sukkah*.

MENORAH LIGHTING TIMES FOR CROWN HEIGHTS

Plag haminchah (lit., half of Minchah) is the earliest possible time to light candles for public lightings (and for individuals in extenuating circumstances).

The best time to light is after *shki'ah* (sunset), between Minchah and Maariv, except Friday, when Chanukah candles are lit immediately prior to lighting Shabbos candles and *motzoei Shabbos*, when candles are lit after Havdalah.

If unable to light at that time, it is okay to light until *chatzos* (halachic midnight), as long as the family has not gone to sleep. *B'dieved* (with no other recourse), candles may be lit anytime at night, if family members are awake.

Note: The times for *shki'ah* listed below are the times that appear in the calendars (sunset at sea level). For purposes of menorah lighting, add several minutes. In this context, several minutes should also be added to the times for *plag haminchah*.

SUNDAY, 24 KISLEV (DECEMBER 18), 1ST NIGHT

Plag Haminchah - 3:33 pm
Shki'ah - 4:31 pm
Chatzos - 11:52 pm

MONDAY, 25 KISLEV (DECEMBER 19), 2ND NIGHT

Plag Haminchah - 3:33 pm
Shki'ah - 4:31 pm
Chatzos - 11:53 pm

TUESDAY, 26 KISLEV (DECEMBER 20), 3RD NIGHT

Plag Haminchah - 3:34 pm
Shki'ah - 4:32 pm
Chatzos - 11:53 pm

WEDNESDAY, 27 KISLEV (DECEMBER 21), 4TH NIGHT

Plag Haminchah - 3:34 pm
Shki'ah - 4:32 pm
Chatzos - 11:54 pm

THURSDAY, 28 KISLEV (DECEMBER 22), 5TH NIGHT

Plag Haminchah - 3:35 pm
Shki'ah - 4:33 pm
Chatzos - 11:55 pm

FRIDAY, 29 KISLEV (DECEMBER 23), 6TH NIGHT

Plag Haminchah - 3:35 pm
Shabbos Candles - 4:14 pm
(18 minutes before shki'ah)

MOTZOEI SHABBOS, EVE OF 1 TEVES (DECEMBER 24), 7TH NIGHT

Shabbos Ends - 5:19 pm
Chatzos - 11:56 pm

SUNDAY, 1 TEVES (DECEMBER 25), 8TH NIGHT

Plag Haminchah - 3:37 pm
Shki'ah - 4:35 pm
Chatzos - 11:57 pm

SCHEDULING PARTIES

Those organizing Chanukah parties for friends or relatives should host these events at a location and hour that will allow the participants to light their own menoros at the correct time **in their own homes**. It is therefore best to avoid arranging parties in the early hours of the evening, from a half an hour before sunset until after nightfall; since the participants are not actually staying at the location in which the party is held, they cannot fulfill their obligation by lighting the menorah at that location. It is also forbidden to sit down to a meal during the half hour prior to kindling time.

THE DREIDEL

On the eve of Ches Teves 5747, the Rebbe stated, “As is known, the word *goshnah* (lit., to Goshen) in the phrase ‘He sent Yehudah ahead of him, to Yosef, to direct him to Goshen’¹⁹ is comprised of the four letters that appear on the *dreidel*, which form the acronym of *neis gadol hayah sham* (A great miracle happened there). It has been observed that the Rebbeim also used dreidels in their homes. As is known, there are numerous allusions contained in the dreidel and all of its details, as described in the books that elucidate the reasons behind Jewish customs (and: ‘Jewish customs are Torah’).²⁰”

SUNDAY, 24 KISLEV

Erev Chanukah

Tachanun is not recited during Minchah.

For the Rebbe’s insight into the superiority of *erev Chanukah* over *erev Yom Tov*, see the *sichah* of *Motzoei Shabbos Vayeishev* 5739.

LIGHTING IN SHUL

In order to further publicize the miracle, we light a menorah in shul and recite the appropriate blessings. Since this lighting is for publicity’s sake, at least a *minyan* must present (all at the same time) while the candles burn—preferably at the time that the blessings are recited.

Most shuls use candles and not olive oil for the public lighting. This is also the custom in 770.

If the shul will empty after the lighting, it is permissible to extinguish the flames, even if a half hour has not yet passed from the lighting, especially if leaving them lit unsupervised creates a fire hazard.

The shul’s menorah should be on the southern wall, its lamps stretching from

¹⁹) Bereishis 46:28

²⁰) This concept is also explained in *Sefer Hasichos* 5748 p. 260, fn. 32 and *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 12, notes at foot of p. 33; *Igros Kodesh* vol. 9, p. 66

east to west. It should be placed on a platform to make it visible (higher than ten *tefachim* from the floor, in contrast to the home menorah which should be lower).

In 770, it is customary for the one lighting the menorah to stand facing south.

It is best to prepare the menorah **before** Minchah, to avoid distracting those who are praying.

It is the Chabad custom to light the shul menorah towards the conclusion of Minchah before reciting *Aleinu*. There is no need to wait until *shki'ah* (sunset); it can be kindled any time after *plag haminchah*. The *chazzan* recites three blessings on the first night, including *Shehechyanu*.²¹ On the remaining nights, two blessings are said.

The lamps of the menorah should not be kindled until all the blessings are fully concluded.

On the first night of Chanukah, the first right-hand lamp of the menorah is kindled. On each subsequent night, another light is added to the left side. The new lamp is lit first, followed by the others, from left to right.

Attending a menorah lighting in shul or at an outdoor public event does not dispense with each person's obligation to kindle a menorah at home. Even the *chazzan* who lit the shul menorah must light again upon returning home and he must repeat all the blessings. If there is no one else at the *chazzan's* home on the first night observing and fulfilling their obligation through his private menorah lighting, he should only repeat the first two blessings—but not the blessing of *Shehechyanu*.

A CHANUKAH HAKHEL

In 5748, the Rebbe said: We do not find a precedent of holding public gatherings during Chanukah in order to expound on matters pertaining to the festival. (To the contrary: As is known, Frieddiker Rebbe was accustomed, as was his father, the Rebbe Rashab, to kindle the Chanukah light within the confines of his home, with only his own family present.) Nevertheless, since so many tens of Jews have already gathered and assembled for the prayer service and to kindle the Chanukah lights in shul (in addition to each of them lighting a *menorah* in his own home in a manner that publicizes the miracle, and so on) – and in addition, those assembled want and desire to hear something about Chanukah, be it a matter of halachah, Aggadah, or the like, there is no reason not to—and indeed, it would be extremely good and fitting to—utilize this gathering to increase the publicity of the miracle through discussing matters pertaining to Chanukah. This year, doing so is all the more necessary because it is a year of Hakhel—“Assemble the nation, the men, the women, and the children ... to fear Hashem your G-d.” We must therefore use every opportunity to assemble men, women, and children in order to arouse them in matters of Judaism, the Torah and its commandments—“A commandment is a candle and the Torah is

21) A mourner should not light the shul menorah on the first night of Chanukah for this reason.

light”—the essential point and theme of which is “to fear Hashem your G-d.”²²

It is noteworthy that the mitzvah of Hakhel is to be performed during Sukkos. Chanukah and Sukkos are associated in numerous ways:

The most obvious correlation is in their number of days. Both Chanukah and Sukkos span eight days, because in addition to the seven days of Sukkos, there is also Shemini Atzeres (unlike Pesach which lasts seven days without a subsequent festival, and unlike Shavuot [and Purim] that are single-day festivals).

On both Chanukah and Sukkos we recite the entire *Hallel* each and every day. This is because each day of Chanukah is considered unique due to the specific number of lights kindled that day, and each day of Sukkos is likewise considered unique due to the specific number of sacrifices offered that day.²³

Chanukah and Sukkos are also related thematically. The name Chanukah refers to the *Chanukas Hamizbei'ach* and *Chanukas Hamikdash* – the rededication of the Altar and the Second Temple. It is significant that the original dedication of the (First) Temple took place on Sukkos.²⁴

Chanukah and Sukkos are further associated in the manner of kindling the lights. The number of lights differ on each night of Chanukah in order “to correspond to the pattern of sacrifices offered during Sukkos.”²⁵ “The House of Hillel argues only in deference to the obligation to increase in matters of sanctity (instead of decreasing, as per the Sukkos sacrifices that represent the nations).²⁶ There is also a spiritual parallel between the Chanukah lights and the Sukkos sacrifices in that both serve to elicit the supernal *makifim* (“encompassing lights”).²⁷

SUNDAY NIGHT, FIRST NIGHT OF CHANUKAH

YOUR TORAH FOR THE MULTITUDES

In *Parshas Vayeishev* 5748, the Rebbe states: The key miracle of Chanukah involved spiritual concerns—Torah study and the performance of mitzvos (as it is stated), “They revoked their religion and did not permit them to occupy themselves with Torah and mitzvos,” (and as recited on Chanukah) “...to make them forget Your Torah and transgress the decrees of Your will.” Consequently, the victory is primarily a spiritual triumph [which is why our Sages] “established and made them into days of praise and thanksgiving.” Similarly, they decreed that the miracle be memorialized through kindling lights, in the spirit of “a commandment is a candle, and the Torah is light.” (*Mishlei* 6:23) “They established a memorial for the miracle in a matter of Divine service.”

22) *Sichos Yemei Chanukah, Acharei Hadlakas Neiros* 5748

23) See *Shibolei HaLeket*, 174, quoted in *Beis Yosef, Orach Chayim*, 683; and elsewhere.

24) *Melachim* 1 8:45

25) *Shabbos* 21b

26) See *Ohr HaTorah, Chanukah* (vol. 5), p. 942b.

27) See *Torah Ohr, Mikeitz*, 34a; see at length *Tanu Rabanan Mitzvas Neir Chanukah* 5738; and elsewhere.

From this it is understood that the days of Chanukah are especially auspicious to further encourage and strengthen Torah study—"Your Torah"—and the observance of *mitzvos*—"the decrees of Your will" (in the spirit of) "a commandment is a candle and the Torah is light." We should do so in a manner of "publicizing the miracle" and "with a multitude of people." This is also the theme of "Assemble the nation, the men, the women, and the children ... to fear Hashem your G-d."

THE INNER DIMENSION

In a footnote to that *sichah*, the Rebbe adds: The ultimate purpose of studying "Your Torah," and observing "the decrees of Your will" is (expressed in the verse), "And Hashem has commanded us to perform all these laws to fear Hashem our G-d." Also note that the war of the *Yevanim* was not against studying Torah or performing mitzvos *per se*, but rather, that no mention be made that the Torah is Hashem's Torah ("Your Torah"), and that the commandments are Hashem's mitzvos ("the decree of Your will"). They fought specifically against the emphasis on fear of Heaven within the observance of Torah and mitzvos.

This is associated specifically with the dimension of Torah that is compared to oil, namely, the Torah's inner, mystical teachings, and especially the highly elucidated form in which these teachings are presented in the teachings of Chabad *Chassidus*. Through these teachings, one comes "to fear Hashem," in the spirit of, "Know the G-d of your father and serve Him with a complete heart." (*Divrei HaYamim* I 28:9)

LIGHTING ON TIME

The time and place for the menorah lighting in each household were originally established for maximum public exposure. Although it has become customary to light the menorah indoors and not in an entrance facing the street (in view of pedestrians), it is nevertheless appropriate to light within the correct time frame.

According to Chabad custom, we light the menorah at home immediately after the true moment of *shki'ah*, between Minchah and Maariv on each night of Chanukah, except for *erev Shabbos* (which requires an earlier lighting) and *motzoei Shabbos* (which requires a delayed lighting).

It is the Chabad custom to fill the menorah with sufficient fuel to burn for at least fifty minutes, so that it remains lit for half an hour after nightfall.

The Rebbe strongly emphasized the importance of lighting the menorah ourselves in its proper time, before *tzeis hakochavim*, and also with regard to encouraging others while doing *mitvza Chanukah*—encouraging and facilitating the lighting of a menorah on time by as many Jews as possible.²⁸

28) Below is an excerpt from *Sichas Motzoei Shabbos Vayeishev, Ohr L'chof Kislev*, 5739 (taken from a recording of the Rebbe's address). See the original *sichah* for the full message.

"The main thing is the action ... It is readily apparent that in order to light the Chanukah lights in their appropriate time, we must make all of the necessary preparations in advance, on *erev Chanukah*. Otherwise, we may end up dragging the lighting to beyond sundown. How much more of an absolute necessity it is to consider, out of *ahavas Yisrael*, ways in which our fellow Jews might be enabled to light the Chanukah lights in

PRE-LIGHTING ACTIVITY

If you are unable to light the menorah before the time for Maariv arrives, you should first recite Maariv and only then light your menorah.

It is forbidden to begin a *melachah* (time-consuming work) or a meal within a half hour of the proper kindling time. Snacking is permitted, if necessary, in an amount less than the meal-appropriate size (up to the volume of *kebeitzah*, the amount that fits into two small matchboxes) of *hamotzi* or *mezonos*—or on fruit and other non-*mezonos* foods, even in larger quantities. Nevertheless, those who are extra scrupulous avoid snacking as well.²⁹

If you begin a prohibited activity, you must stop. Some opinions maintain that studying Torah is only prohibited once the proper time of kindling has arrived. It is recommended to appoint someone—who is not busy eating or studying—to remind you to light the menorah.

Some authorities maintain that if it is arranged for a second person to remind you, you may even sit down to a meal.

Women and girls who will not be lighting their own menorah because they will be included in their husband or father's lighting may eat after the time for lighting the menorah has arrived.

Those who set off on *mitzva Chanukah* without lighting their own menorah must be careful to consider the above requirements. They are permitted to eat non-*mezonos* foods, even if those foods are filling. If they find themselves in great need of nourishment, they can be lenient within half an hour prior to the time of lighting and even eat *mezonos* more than the volume of *kebeitzah*. (If it is truly urgent, even bread is permitted.) After the time of lighting has arrived, they may eat if it is truly necessary, as long as they have not reached their living quarters. In such cases, it is appropriate to arrange for someone to remind them of the need to light the menorah as soon as they return home. It is best to fully prepare a menorah at home in advance, before leaving, so that the lighting is not delayed more than necessary. The above leniencies aside, do your best to refrain from eating bread or *mezonos* more than the volume of *kebeitzah* before lighting the menorah wherever possible.

the exact way that we do (*kemocha*)—in the same manner we conduct advance preparations.

“To achieve this, we must devote our time on *erev Chanukah* to the Chanukah campaign, with enormous effort and energy, and go all out for this goal ... We cannot allow ourselves to rationalize that if we are unable to reach out to an individual in time to ensure that he lights before sundown on the first night of Chanukah, we can always do so in time for the second or third night. Or that even if we reach out for the first night, we are satisfied if he lights before *chatzos*, or while members of his household are still awake, and so on, based on the details specified in halachah. Such an approach is entirely misplaced and misguided regarding any of the mitzvos, and certainly for the mitzvah of the Chanukah lights.”

²⁹ See Hebrew entry for references.

HOW LATE?

If you did not light the menorah at the appropriate time, you may do so later, provided that there is still pedestrian traffic outside, established as a half hour after the appropriate time. If this time has elapsed, you must at least attempt to light the menorah before halachic midnight. If this is not an option, you may light the menorah during the night, any time before dawn, provided that other members of the household are awake to observe the lighting. If they are asleep, it is worth rousing at least two individuals—if not, one will do—so that you can recite the blessings. If they are asleep, and rousing them is not an option, you may light the menorah without the blessings.

However, someone who lives alone or has no household with him where he is staying, should light **with** a blessing.

If you know in advance that you will be unable to light the menorah on time, it is possible to light it earlier—any time after *plag haminchah*. In that case, make certain that the menorah holds sufficient fuel to continue burning until a half hour after nightfall. However, there are varying opinions regarding reciting the blessings at this early hour. Some authorities prefer that you appoint a representative to light the menorah at the proper time on your behalf rather than light early. In the final analysis, it is far better to personally light the menorah and to recite the blessings—even if it can be done only later at night—than to appoint a representative or to light earlier in the day without the blessings.

Lighting on time takes priority over remaining near the candles for the first half hour after lighting. Therefore, light on time even if you cannot remain near the menorah, rather than delay the lighting to a more convenient time. Nevertheless, linger at least briefly after lighting, and preferably, arrange for someone else to remain near the lit menorah in your stead. This is also highly appropriate for another reason—to minimize the risk of a fire from leaving burning flames unattended.

MENORAH PLACEMENT

It is the custom of the Chabad Rebbeim to position the menorah in a doorway to a room in the home, and not to place it on a windowsill facing the outside.

Light the menorah in the room in which meals are consumed on a regular basis, if there is a choice of multiple rooms or even homes. When visiting a friend, even for a meal, return home to light the menorah.

It is a mitzvah to place the menorah within a *tefach* (handbreadth, around three inches) of the left doorpost. If there is no mezuzah on the right doorpost, the menorah should be placed on the right, whether this is because the doorway does not require a mezuzah, or it does, but is nonetheless lacking one.

It is the Chabad custom to position the menorah within the actual space of the doorway, alongside the width of its doorposts, and to place it on a somewhat lower

object such as chair, without concern for the direction of the branches—whether they stretch from east to west or north to south.

HOW HIGH?

The lights of the menorah must be situated at least three *tefachim* (approximately ten inches) from the floor but no higher than ten *tefachim* (approximately thirty-one inches). It is not the Chabad custom to specifically position them between seven and ten *tefachim*, or, alternatively, close to three. If someone did light the menorah above ten *tefachim*, they have fulfilled their obligation, but at twenty *amos* (approximately thirty feet) or higher it must be relit.

A menorah that is exceedingly tall may rest level with the floor so that its lights will be at the appropriate height. Out of respect for a mitzvah-article, a flat tray may be placed as a barrier between the menorah and the ground. According to most *poskim*, it is sufficient for the menorah itself to be in the ten-tefachim range, even if its lamps are higher. To keep the lit menorah out of the reach of a child, a higher placement is certainly permissible. When there is a safety concern, there is room to be lenient and place the entire menorah above ten *tefachim*.³⁰

When more than one menorah is placed in an identical location, a *heker* (distinguishing feature) is necessary, such as each individual lighting their own candelabra, placed in a way that allows the viewer to easily observe how many lights each menorah contains. It should not appear as one single menorah.

THE SHAMASH

The shamash should be placed higher than the other lights.

If a number of people are lighting menoros in different locations in a house, each menorah must have its own *shamash* light. This applies even if there is already a candle (for general illumination) on the table. There are numerous reasons, including mystical ones, for lighting a *shamash*. Likewise, there are sources that refer to a total of forty-four lights over the course of Chanukah, a number that includes using a *shamash* each day. Therefore, there is room to be *mehader* that even if numerous people light at the identical location with a *heker*, each person should light a separate *shamash*.

Children are trained to personally light their own menoros. They should begin from the earliest possible age. It is preferable for each child to light at the doorway to their own bedroom. Naturally, all safety measures should be in place for this event. See the excerpt from the Rebbe, below.

LIGHTING FOR CHINUCH

The Rebbe instructs, “In addition to explaining the significance of lighting the Chanukah menorah to children, it is advisable for children to have a menorah

30) See details and sources on www.asktherav.com, Halacha2go archives 467

situated at the entrance to their rooms. The lighting should take place there as well. Children are impressed by the Chanukah lighting experience to a far greater degree when it is held at the entrances to their own rooms. The menorah's message enters deeper into their souls and their *chinuch* (Jewish education) is thereby advanced. The *chinuch* (alt. meaning: inauguration) of their bedrooms is also advanced, for every child's room should serve as a *mikdash me'at* (a miniature *Beis Hamikdash*). This experience reflects and alludes to the *chinuch* of the *Beis Hamikdash* (the reinauguration of the Second Temple by the Maccabees) that is commemorated with the festival of Chanukah.³¹

In answer to questions whether girls are included in the above directive, the Rebbe suggests that parents' overriding principle in making educational decisions should be the effect any given experience will have on their particular child: will implementing the practice indeed advance her *chinuch*?³²

Yeshivah *bachurim* should light the menorah at the entrance to their dorm rooms. Needless to say, they should observe all fire safety procedures.

WOMEN LIGHTING

Women are equally obligated in this mitzvah. The custom in the homes of the Chabad Rebbeim is that unmarried girls or women do not light their own menoros, but fulfill their obligation through their fathers' lighting. Married women fulfill their obligation via their husbands.

An unmarried woman or one whose husband will not be lighting in their home must kindle the flames personally or via a representative. When she lights, she makes the blessings. If she has minor children in the house who light their own menorah, she must still kindle her own.

The Rebbe states: "The [Frierdiker] Rebbe related that when his father, the Rebbe [Rashab], had to leave home before Chanukah, he instructed his wife, Rebbetzin Shterna Sarah, to personally light her own menorah, although she would listen to the blessings recited by one of the men."³³

Girls studying in seminaries away from home must therefore fulfill the mitzvah where they presently live. However, one girl may be appointed as a representative to light a menorah on behalf of them all.

WHEN LIGHTING

If circumstances permit lighting of a menorah only on condition that its flames are extinguished almost immediately after lighting, do not recite the blessings. In such an instance, it is recommended to also light an electric menorah, without reciting the blessings.

31) *Sefer Hasichos* 5748, p. 162. See there for the connection to this year of Hakhel.

32) *Hisva'aduyos* 5748, vol. 2, p. 91. For further elaboration, see p. 133.

33) *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 30, p. 312

The *Taz* states, “In the case of one who lives in town and happens to leave his home to eat in a friend’s home, it is obvious that he should not abandon [lighting the menorah at] his home by [instead] lighting the menorah in his friend’s home, at which he eats on a one-time basis. Rather, he should return to his own home to light the menorah there ... It makes no sense to light in the location where he spends an hour or two over a meal instead of at his own home. It is as if he happened to be standing in the street when the time for lighting arrived – it is clearly inappropriate for him to light in the street! True, we observe a few people who eat at the home of others and then send someone to fetch their menoros for them so that they can light there [at their friend’s home] ... but they are making an error and fail to understand what is expected from them.”³⁴

For the sake of lending the greatest possible publicity to the miracle, gather the entire household to attend the menorah lighting. It is worth lighting close to supertime, when the family naturally gathers. If no one is home at the time for lighting, it is permitted to wait until the household members arrive. Ideally, everyone should be present, but the lighting may take place even if one or more members are missing.

It is not Chabad custom to don Shabbos clothing when lighting the menorah, however a *gartel* is worn.

FIRST NIGHT’S LIGHT

On the first night of Chanukah, one lamp is lit to the extreme right of the menorah.

LAW OF REDEMPTION: HILLEL & SHAMAI

In the current era, halachah follows *Beis Hillel*, who holds that the fewest number of lights are lit on the first night of Chanukah and that the number of lights steadily **increases** on each subsequent night. The opinion of *Beis Shamai* is that the greatest number of lights is lit on the first night of Chanukah and that they steadily **diminish** on each subsequent night. As a result, eight lights are lit on the first night (instead of just one), seven on the second night, six on the third, and so on.

The Rebbe asks: “This requires further illumination: In the era of the Redemption, halachah will follow the opinion of *Beis Shamai*—when Moshiach first arrives, will the halachah immediately switch to the views of *Beis Shamai*? If so, then this year, we will need to light eight candles on the first night of Chanukah. Accordingly, our Chanukah preparations will have to reflect this.”³⁵

³⁴ This topic is elaborated in the Day-by-Day Halachic Guide (Hebrew) Chanukah 5776, quoting the views of *Bach*, *Magen Avraham* and *Admor Hazaken*, and we also reported on the practice of the Rebbe Rashab.

See at length www.asktherav.com 1979, that it is entirely incorrect and ineffective to light a menorah for the sake of fulfilling one’s personal obligation while situated in an airport or similar venue.

³⁵ *Sichas Erev Chanukah* 5750. See, however, *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayishlach* 5752, that “at that time, we will experience the perfection of the concept of steadily increasing from one day to the next.”

According to the Rebbe's explanation in the *sichah* of *Simchas Torah* 5752, in the initial stage of the Redemption, the law will follow the view of *Beis Shamai*, whereas in the advanced stage of Redemption, the law will follow both *Beis Hillel* as well as *Beis Shamai*. At that time, the physical world will be the recipient of the revelation of *Atzmus*, Hashem's Essence. He is able to tolerate impossibilities, and He considers opposing views of our Sages as equally valid divine disclosures. The impossibility of following both views will then become possible, and that will become the practical law.³⁶

THE BLESSINGS

The *shamash* must be lit before reciting the blessings, so that it is available for kindling the lamps immediately upon concluding the blessings.

The *shamash* should be held in the right hand. Left-handed individuals should hold it in their left hand.

The three blessings are: (1) *lehadlik ner Chanukah* (2) *she'asah nissim la'avoseinu* and (3) *Shehechyanu*. The menorah is kindled only after reciting the blessings. The *shamash* must be held beside the wick until the majority of the tip is aflame. After the kindling is completed, *Haneiros Halalu* is recited.

Someone who recited the blessings previously (as the *chazzan* in shul, for example, or while doing *mitzvot*) must repeat them when lighting his own menorah at home. He should not repeat the third blessing (*Shehechyanu*) on the first night unless others are currently fulfilling their obligation through him.

SAFETY ALERT!

The Torah insists that protecting lives should be taken even more seriously than religious observance: Children must not be permitted access to a lit menorah or to matches and the like without responsible, adult supervision. Nor should a lit menorah be left unattended without adequate safety precautions.

POST-LIGHTING

It is customary to remain beside the menorah for the first half hour after its kindling. However, if you are not able to remain, you should still light on time rather than postpone it. Nevertheless, make an effort to at least linger briefly before abandoning a newly lit menorah. The best option when forced to leave is to appoint someone else to continue watching the menorah until the end of the thirty minutes.

³⁶Note that according to one version of our Sages' teaching, "All the festivals will be nullified in the future era, except for Chanukah and Purim," as quoted in *Igeres HaTi'ul*, *Derush Ois Mem*, and in *Sefer Hachaim* (vol. 3, beginning of ch. 7) - also see *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 5, p. 172, fn. 4. See *Ateres Zahav* (676), that the term used in the blessing over the menorah - *lehadlik*, "to kindle," refers to the kindling of the Chanukah lights in the Future Era. On the other hand, *Maggid Meisharim Parshas Vayakhel*, seems to imply that in the Future Era only the verbal recounting of the miracle will be observed. See *Ben Ish Chai* (vol. 2, *Derush Alef Leshabbos Shuvah*). It is also necessary to clarify the concept of lighting candles at night in the Future Era. According to *Shemos Rabbah* (ch. 18, 11), "In the future era, night will become day, as it is stated, 'The light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun.'" Note the statement in *Sha'alos Uteshuvos Be'er Moshe* (vol. 8, 17).

If a light has extinguished during the fifty minutes (required according to Chabad custom) it should be relit without a blessing. If the menorah remains lit beyond this minimum time, it may be moved. Candles that remain lit may also be extinguished after fifty minutes, if necessary.³⁷

If safety considerations require moving a lit menorah, it may be relocated even within the first thirty minutes. In such a case, it is appropriate to keep it as near as safely possible to its original location. Naturally, try to avoid such a scenario whenever possible by lighting it in a safer location from the start.

It is forbidden to make use of the illumination provided by the Chanukah lights.³⁸ The flames may not be used even to light a *shamash*. Even after the allotted time has passed, do not make use of the light provided by the Chanukah lights.

It is customary for women to refrain from chores for fifty minutes after kindling. (According to some authorities, this applies to men as well.) After fifty minutes, women may work as they wish—provided they do not perform activities in front of the menorah. According to custom, only sewing, knitting, laundering, ironing and the like must be avoided. Other activities, such as sweeping and cleaning the house or cooking and baking may be performed

Take note of the following statement of the Rebbe:

The significance of women customarily refraining from chores while the candles remain lit is that women internalize the concept and message of the burning Chanukah lights to the degree that they shed any association with mundane chores.³⁹

The Rebbe Rashab would sit in proximity to the Chanukah lights and study Torah. Naturally, he avoided making use of the lights themselves. As mentioned in numerous *sichos*, the Rebbe sees in this a directive to increase in Torah study during Chanukah.

MAARIV

During Maariv, *V'al hanissim* is inserted into the *Amidah*.

The gabbai should **not** interject between the blessing of *Hashkiveinu* and the start of the *Amidah* in order to announce “*V'al hanissim!*” for the benefit of the congregation.

If you forgot to recite *V'al hanissim* during the *Amidah*, see the chart at the end of the booklet.

Mivtza Chanukah

Every effort should be expended to ensure that a Chanukah menorah is lit in

³⁷) Some are stringent not to extinguish the candles at all.

³⁸) According to a number of opinions, this includes the light of the *shamash*. Another candle or electric light must be present in the vicinity of the menorah in order to provide general illumination.

³⁹) *Michtav Leil Chanukah*, published in *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 25, p. 512. See *Tur Barekes, Orach Chaim*, 670; *Sefer Hamitzvos (Tzemach Tzedek)*, *Mitzvas Neir Chanukah* beg. ch. 3 (*Derech Mitzvosecha* 74a).

each Jewish household, and that all men including very young children should personally light a menorah.

Menoros should be lit in the most public and central locations to further publicize the miracle of Chanukah. Such public events should be utilized to urge all participants to light their own menoros at home. It is best to clearly announce that no one fulfills their obligation with a public lighting—they must also light at home.

A working man who lights a public menorah at his office for the sake of publicizing the miracle should not recite the blessings unless it is positioned where at least ten Jews will view it at once.

A large aspect of *mitvzoim* is visiting offices and shops to lay tefillin, deliver Shabbos candles, learn a bit of Torah, or the like. When it comes to *mitvza Chanukah*, it is important to emphasize that the goal should be to distribute menoros that the business owners and their clients should **take home and light**, and not to light them in the places of business.

Chanukah Customs

Rambam states that the days of Chanukah are days of joy. The Rema qualifies that “it is partially a mitzvah to increase in meals” during Chanukah. The prevailing custom is to add in festive meals during Chanukah. It is best to sing and recount Hashem’s praises for the miracles that He made for our ancestors during these meals, which will guarantee that the meals are considered *seudos mitzvah* according to all opinions. (Regarding Shabbos Chanukah and Rosh Chodesh Teves, see entries below.)

In numerous *sichos*, the Rebbe discusses the requirement to rejoice on Chanukah. Despite the halachic dispute as to whether rejoicing is actually required or not, the Rebbe encourages an all-out observance of the custom—*mehadrin min hamehadrin*. Included in this, the Rebbe explains, is holding *farbrengens* with fellow Chassidim, family or friends, and reaching positive resolutions for the future.

GATHER BIGGER

“It is fitting and appropriate to organize *farbrengens* and joyful gatherings in the spirit of Hakhel in each and every location during Chanukah. These events should be geared for men, for women, and for children, and their goal should be to motivate the participants to advance in Torah and mitzvos—“A commandment is a candle and the Torah is light”—and to inspire them in a matter that is the start of all Divine service as well as its very core and source: “To fear Hashem your G-d.”

It is customary to serve cheese and milk products during Chanukah.

We serve foods that are prepared with oil in order to recall the miracle of the oil. In

Sefer Hasichos 5752,⁴⁰ the Rebbe explains this custom at length.

LATKES & DONUTS

The blessing for *latkes* made from grated potatoes is *ha'adamah*. If the potatoes were completely crushed or potato flour was used, the blessing is *shehakol*. If flour from the five grains was added for flavor, the blessing is *mezonos*.

If someone eats a portion of *latkes*, and then wants more, they need not make a new *brachah*. This applies whether they had intention of eating a second portion or not. It makes no difference if they made the decision to indulge in more before or after finishing their first portion. This applies whether *latkes* remain from the batch he initially ate from, or even if the second batch was not yet fried when they made the *brachah*—as long as they were aware that more were theoretically available for consumption.

The blessing for doughnuts is *mezonos* (with an after-blessing of *al hamichiyah*). This is true even if someone makes a meal out of doughnuts, eating enough of them to be full.

It is customary to recite a separate blessing (*mezonos*) over doughnuts that are eaten as a snack, even when eating them during a proper meal with bread. This is true if they are eaten as a snack or as dessert at the end of the meal. However, if they are eaten for the purpose of satiation, in the place of regular food, they must be considered like any food that is integral to a meal and no independent blessing is recited over them—they are included in the blessing of *hamotzi* recited at the start of the meal.

It should be noted that some stores sell cake doughnuts that are not deep fried in oil—such doughnuts consumed for the sake of satiation must be eaten during a meal, and thereby included in the blessing of *hamotzi*.

A batch of dough intended for fried doughnuts are exempt from the requirement of separating *challah*.

Netilas yadayim (without a blessing) is required for doughnuts and *latkes* fried in olive oil that retain enough moisture on the surface to transfer liquid when touched.

Commercially fried doughnuts that are generally cooked in vegetable oil or the like, do not need hand-washing.⁴¹ However, all doughnuts must be *bishul Yisrael* (cooked, even in a commercial setting, with the participation of a Shabbos observant Jew).⁴²

40) Page 196

41) It can be assumed that olive oil is not used—see Hebrew footnotes for why we are lenient in all circumstances. Doughnuts that are iced or jam-laced may be an issue, however, since these confections are usually water-based.

42) See www.asktherav.com 18021 for references.

V'AL HANISSIM

In *Birchas Hamazon*, the *V'al hanissim* prayer is inserted into the blessing of *Nodeh lecha*. If you forgot to recite *V'al hanissim* in *Birchas Hamazon*, see the chart at the end of the booklet.

GELT & MORE

For directives regarding Chanukah *gelt*, see the entries below for the fifth night of Chanukah. There, the directive to give Chanukah *gelt* on each night of Chanukah is discussed.

It is customary to give additional *tzedakah* during Chanukah.

We wish each other *ah freilichen Chanukah* ("Happy Chanukah!") or *ah gutten chanukah* ("Have a good Chanukah!").

SHARE & FARBRENG

On Shabbos *Parshas Vayeishev* 5752, the Rebbe stated, "Seeing that we have already accomplished all that was required and nevertheless the Redemption has not yet arrived, it is extremely appropriate to 'publicize the miracle,' meaning that we should publicize the miracles that Hashem performs for us, broadcasting this awareness to ourselves and to others in every location. We should do so with the understanding that publicizing Hashem's miracles brings the true and complete Redemption. This effort should be stepped up during Chanukah—a festival whose entire purpose is to publicize Hashem's miracles.

"In addition to all of our other activities, including *mitvza Chanukah*, we should hold *Chassidishe farbrengens* on each day of Chanukah. Naturally, these events may be renamed to fit the location and the audience—'When you visit a city, follow its local customs.' At these *farbrengens*, we should discuss words of Torah, both *nigleh* and *pnimius* and make positive resolutions in all matters of Torah and mitzvos, so that there is a steady increase—in a manner reflecting the steadily increasing lights of the menorah. Above all, we must use these events to discuss and publicize miracles that occur nowadays—in the spirit of the Chanukah blessing, *bayamim haheim bizman hazeh*, 'In those days [of yore as well as] **in the current era**."⁴³

MONDAY, 25 KISLEV**First Day of Chanukah****SHACHARIS**

In the morning, it is customary to kindle the shul menorah without a blessing and to keep it alight for the duration of Shacharis. Use a *shamash* for this lighting.

In 5750, the Rebbe instructed, "To further increase the impact of the Chanukah

43) *Sefer Hasichos*

lights, it is appropriate to keep the menorah that is lit in shul (where everyone gathers) burning around the clock, provided that there is no concern of children playing with fire.”

Do not skip *V'al hanissim*, even if you are hurrying to complete the *Amidah* in time to respond to *Kedushah* or *Modim* together with the congregation. If you forgot *V'al hanissim* in davening, see the chart at the end of the booklet.

RECITING HALLEL

The complete Hallel is recited **each** day of Chanukah.

Chazal instituted the recital of Hallel during Chanukah as a binding obligation. It is therefore recited even in a house of mourning, because the mourner himself must also recite this *hallel*.

Do not verbally interrupt the recitation of Hallel to speak of other matters, except for those matters for which it is permitted to interrupt the blessings of the *Shema*.

If you omitted any word from Hallel, you are required to repeat it from the very beginning, according to a minority of halachic opinions. You should do so, but without another brachah.

Following Hallel, *chatzi Kaddish* is recited, followed by the Torah reading comprised of three *aliyos* from *Parshas Naso*, as described in the *Siddur*.

An *avel* (within his period of mourning) may lead the congregation throughout Chanukah, with the exception of Hallel, for which someone else must take over. The *avel* resumes his position as *chazzan* immediately, and he recites the *chatzi Kaddish* that follows Hallel.

FASTING, EULOGIES, GRAVESITES

It is forbidden to fast or to deliver a eulogy during Chanukah. The only exception is a *ta'anis chalom* (a fast for a deeply unsettling dream). Unlike Chol Hamoed, all forms of work may be performed during Chanukah.

The Ohel: It is permissible to visit the gravesite of a *tzaddik* during Chanukah, and the Rebbe personally did so. When reciting *Ma'aneh Lashon*, omit the *viduy* (confession). According to the letter of the law, it is similarly permitted to visit a parent's burial place; however, it is customary to refrain from such visits. It is important to avoid mourning and weeping.

LAW OF REDEMPTION: THE CHANUKAH MEGILLAH

The following statement is recorded in *Sha'alos Uteshuvos Tzafnas Panei'ach Hachadashos*⁴⁴: "...May we speedily merit the coming of our righteous Moshiach and the true Redemption! Then will be revealed to us the megillah that the elders of *Beis*

44) vol.1, 45

Shamai and *Beis Hillel* inscribed regarding the events of Chanukah, which occurred in their own times. It is only because there were no prophets that they were unable to create an official megillah (to be read by all Jews. Although they personally recorded the events), it was not given over to be written (for public use), as explained in Yoma 29a. G-d willing, in the Future Era, soon, the prophets will be revealed to us and this megillah will be revealed to us!⁴⁵

MONDAY NIGHT, SECOND NIGHT OF CHANUKAH

The Alter Rebbe returned from his incarceration in Petersburg to his home in Vitebsk on the second night of Chanukah, following his original liberation in 5559 (1798). He remained in Vitebsk for the remainder of Chanukah.

Today is the anniversary of the *bris* of the Rebbe Rashab, in the year 5621 (the Hebrew numerals of which spell *kisra*, "crown," a fact that the Tzemach Tzedek associated with the birth of the Rebbe Rashab).⁴⁶

SECOND NIGHT LIGHTS

Sefer Haminhagim Chabad records that "it is customary to use fresh wicks on each night of Chanukah. Other opinions differ, insisting that there is no need for fresh wicks and that used wicks are easier to light. So far, I have been unable to clarify the (Friediker) Rebbe's custom."

Nevertheless, in a *sichah* of Shabbos *Parshas Vayeishev* 5716, the Rebbe states that the Previous Rebbe reused his wicks and he derives a lesson from this.⁴⁷

The third blessing of *Shehechianu* is only recited the first night of Chanukah; on the second night only the first two blessings are said. However, someone who has not yet kindled a menorah this Chanukah must recite *Shehechianu* whenever he first lights a menorah. (This scenario typically occurs when introducing a Jew to Chanukah on *mitvoim*.)

When preparing the menorah on the second night of Chanukah, a new lamp is added to the left of the previous night's lamp. All preparatory measures begin from the left (cleaning the cups, rolling in the wicks, filling up oil). Then kindle the menorah starting with the newest lamp.

It is customary to be stringent and to avoid lighting one Chanukah lamp from another.

After concluding to kindle **all** the lamps, *Haneiros Halalu* is recited.

For more details on the location of the menorah, when and how to light and what to do prior and post-lighting, see the entry for the first night of Chanukah.

45) See *Halachos Gedolos Hilchos Soferim* 75; *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 15, p. 368, fn. 17; and *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayeishev* 5750 (in *Sefer Hasichos*).

46) For the association of this occasion with the second day of Chanukah, see *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayeira* 5730. Take note, however, of *Sichas Motzoei Shabbos Parshas Chayei Sarah* 5740, regarding 27 Marcheshvan.

47) See also *Kuntres Bakodesh Penimah*, p. 24

TUESDAY, 26 KISLEV

Second Day of Chanukah

Today's davening, and for the remaining days of Chanukah (except Shabbos and Rosh Chodesh), are the same as yesterday's. The order of Torah reading for each day of Chanukah is recorded in the *Siddur*.

For the customs of Chanukah related to meals, fried foods, *tzedakah* and other observances, see entry above for the first night of Chanukah. For an overview on Chanukah *gelt*, and when to distribute it, see the entry below for the fifth night.

WEDNESDAY, 27 KISLEV

Third Day of Chanukah

Today is the anniversary of the Alter Rebbe's release from his second incarceration, in the year 5561 (1800).

CHILDREN OF INFLUENCE

In a talk⁴⁸ to the children of Tzivos Hashem in 5748, the Rebbe states:

The uniqueness of the current year is that it is a Hakhel year. When the *Beis Hamikdash* stood the following occurred: On the festival of Sukkos that followed the conclusion of a Shemitah year, the entire Jewish people, men, women, and children, would gather in the *Beis Hamikdash*. The king would read portions of the Torah before them to inspire them to advance in their fear of Heaven. As the Torah states, "At the end of [every] seven years, at an appointed time, in the festival of Sukkos, [after] the year of release, when all Israel comes to appear before Hashem, your G-d, in the place He will choose, you shall read this Torah before all Israel, in their ears. Assemble the people: the men, the women, and the children, and your stranger in your cities, in order that they hear, and in order that they learn and fear Hashem, your G-d, and they will observe to do all the words of this Torah; and their children, who did not know, will hear and learn to fear Hashem, your G-d, all the days ..." (*Devarim* 31:10-13).

For everything that occurred during Temple times there must be—and actually is—a similar concept in our own times. For example, the sacrifices continue because "the daily prayer services were established in the place of the sacrifices." For instance, we just recited the Minchah service, which takes the place of the daily afternoon offering. The same is true of all other Temple matters, even those which did not occur on a daily basis but only during specific times. When they did occur, they were observed with great fanfare, such as the mitzvah of Hakhel. Consequently, there must be a parallel to Hakhel nowadays as well.

This is what is so special about the Chanukah gathering that is being held this year during Hakhel. A gathering is precisely the concept of a *hakhel*—an assembly. And its goal is also identical to the purpose of Hakhel—"in order that

48) *Sichas Yom Zayin d'Chanukah L'yaldei Tzivos Hashem 5748*

they hear, and in order that they learn ... and they will observe to do all the words of this Torah ... to fear Hashem, your G-d.”

There is an even more specific association between Hakhel and a Tzivos Hashem gathering: The foundation of an army is to obey, to be subservient to the commander-in-chief. In the case of Tzivos Hashem, its foundation is fear of Heaven (as per the passage just recited, “Behold, Hashem stands over him ... and He searches his mind and heart [to see] if he is serving Him as is fitting” in Tanya, Chapter 41). This is also the theme of Hakhel, “to fear Hashem, your G-d.”

This, then, is the special instruction resulting from this Tzivos Hashem rally that is being held during Chanukah in a Hakhel year: Each and every one of you—each of us—must use the days of this year of Hakhel to assemble Jewish men, women, and children. This effort should start with children associated with Tzivos Hashem rallying all other Jewish children and saying words of Torah before them—words that inspire them to fear of Heaven and to also join the ranks of Tzivos Hashem. Then those children in turn will influence additional children, and so on. We must also gather and rally their parents and adult brothers and sisters, and inspire them to the extent that they in turn assemble even more men and women—who are naturally beyond the reach of children’s outreach—and inspire these Jews as well to fear of Heaven.

The Torah states that Hashem gives according to our input, measure for measure. Consequently, our efforts to assemble the nation further hastens the time in which it will be possible to observe the mitzvah of Hakhel in the literal sense, in the third *Beis Hamikdash*, through our righteous Moshiach. Then will be fulfilled the prophecy, “To Hashem will be the rulership,” the revelation of Hashem’s dominion over every aspect of Creation.

THURSDAY, 28 KISLEV

Fourth Day of Chanukah

On this date, King Yehoyakim burned the original *Megillas Eichah* that Yirmiyahu Hanavi had dictated to his disciple, the prophet Baruch, foretelling the destruction of the *Beis Hamikdash*.⁴⁹

THURSDAY NIGHT, FIFTH NIGHT OF CHANUKAH

It is customary among Chassidim to celebrate the fifth night of Chanukah, because one account of the Alter Rebbe’s liberation from his second incarceration in 5561 (1800) sets the fifth night of Chanukah as the date of his release. The Rebbe suggests that various stages in his liberation occurred on the third and the fifth night of Chanukah.

⁴⁹) *Shulchan Aruch Orach Chayim* 580. The commentaries point out that there are various versions as to the precise date of this event.

CHANUKAH GELT

The Rebbe Rashab would distribute *Chanukah gelt* on the fourth or fifth night of Chanukah. In 5748, a Hakhel year, the Rebbe instructed that *Chanukah gelt* be given on each night of Chanukah with the exception of Shabbos, and that additional *gelt* be given on the fourth and fifth nights.

“This is connected with our earlier discussion regarding the custom of distributing *Chanukah gelt*, because giving *Chanukah gelt* generates joy. Also, when it is announced that *Chanukah gelt* will be distributed, large numbers of people gather and assemble. And the more *Chanukah gelt* being offered, the greater the number of people who assemble.”⁵⁰

In a number of *sichos*, the Rebbe encourages making the greatest fuss out of *Chanukah gelt*. It should be given with great fanfare and excitement, in generous amounts, and in increasing amounts. The distribution of *Chanukah gelt* should be designed to make the children happy and excited to receive it.

Although the entire Chanukah is a time of rejoicing and celebration, the children’s delight at receiving *Chanukah gelt* should bring about extra *simchah*, to the point that children who have not yet received *Chanukah gelt* should be deeply impressed simply by hearing about the experiences of their friends who already received the *gelt* (or who were at least promised it).

The Rebbe notes that it is customary for children to receive *gelt* from as many people as possible—in addition to a child’s father, the other members of their family should give *Chanukah gelt* as well. Explain to the children that they are receiving *Chanukah gelt* so that they will further increase their Torah study and to enable them to give more *tzedakah*. “After all,” the Rebbe concludes, “What else is a Jewish child expected to do with money?”

The Rebbe often mentions giving coins or bills as *Chanukah gelt*.⁵¹ However, there is a superiority in giving coins rather than bills from a halachic perspective, as the Rebbe explained during a Tzivos Hashem rally.⁵²

GIVE & GET

Every child should try to personally light the Chanukah lights, and in the optimum way—adding a light each night, climaxing with a full set of eight lights on the final night. Each child should also observe the custom of **giving** *Chanukah gelt*—to a friend, brother, sister, or relative. In addition, each child should increase in Torah learning during the days of Chanukah—studying the laws, history, etc., of Chanukah, and also in general Torah study.⁵³

“*Chanukah gelt* is primarily for children, as we have mentioned on many occasions.

50) *Sichas Parshas Vayeishev* 5748, fn. 105

51) For example, see the second *sichah* of *Yom Daled d’Chanukah* 5750 – addressed to Tzivos Hashem.

52) see *Sichas Neir Ches d’Chanukah* 5748

53) *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 20, p. 451

At the same time, the (Friediker) Rebbe told us that it was widely known that as early as the times of the Tzemach Tzedek, Chassidim were well aware that it is customary to give *Chanukah gelt* to grown children and that this is done even after their marriages. The details of this practice was (purposefully) recorded and published.⁵⁴

“The (Friediker) Rebbe **personally** gave his daughters *Chanukah gelt*, and continued even after their marriages.”⁵⁵

Teacher Appreciation: It has become customary in many communities for school children to deliver *Chanukah gelt* and other gifts to the teachers who teach them Torah.⁵⁶

FRIDAY, 29 KISLEV

Fifth Day of Chanukah

Erev Shabbos, Erev Rosh Chodesh

Erev Rosh Chodesh is observed by many as *Yom Kippur Katan*, a day of fasting and Selichos. Today, however, we are not permitted to fast or even recite *Tachanun* due to the joyous festival of Chanukah. In *Likkutei Sichos*, the Rebbe explains the association of this day to *teshuvah ila'ah*, the higher form of *teshuvah* that is beyond repentance for sins.⁵⁷

In today's reading of *shnayim mikra v'echad targum*,⁵⁸ the custom of the Chabad Rebbeim is to say all *Haftoros* relevant to this Shabbos. The *Haftorah* of *Mikeitz* is read after completing *shnayim mikra v'echad targum* on *erev Shabbos*, while the Torah portion from *shevi'i* until the conclusion is read once again (also in the manner of *shnayim mikra v'echad targum*) on Shabbos morning, but this time it is followed by the *Haftoros* of Shabbos Chanukah, Shabbos Rosh Chodesh, as well as *Machar Chodesh*.

SHABBOS PREP

Minchah is recited earlier than usual, because it precedes the lighting of the menorah. If there is no early *minyán* available, you should first light the menorah and then join the regular *minyán* for Minchah. The shul menorah is lit after Minchah—anytime after *plag haminchah* (3:35 pm).

It is appropriate to complete all Shabbos preparations before lighting the menorah,

54) *Roshei Devarim Sichas Zos Chanukah* 5749 (*achar tefilas Minchah*)

55) *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 20, p. 451, fn. 36. See also *Sichas Motzoei Shabbos Vayeshev* 5738 that the Friediker Rebbe would also give *Chanukah gelt* to his sons-in-law. See also *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Mikeitz* 5723; *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 25, p. 418, fn. 25—regarding the emphasis of personally giving the *Chanukah gelt*. See also *Sichas Motzoei Shabbos Parshas Vayeishev* 5738, where the Rebbe also mentions the custom of giving to sons-in-law.

56) Regarding the use of *maaser* money as *Chanukah gelt* for Torah teachers, see www.asktherav.com 1981.57) vol. 15, p. 545

58) The requirement to review the weekly *parashah*, primarily on *erev Shabbos*, by reciting the Torah text twice and the (Onkelos) translation in Aramaic once.

so that the entire family can attend the lighting together. The menorah must be lit before the Shabbos candles and is therefore lit earlier than any other day of Chanukah. (Shabbos candle lighting time, eighteen minutes before *shki'ah*, is at 4:14 pm). Chanukah candles can be lit any time after *plag haminchah*, although it is best to light it as close as possible to Shabbos candle-lighting time.

THE SHABBOS MENORAH

An extra-large quantity of oil should be used today, so that the menorah continues to burn for at least fifty minutes after sunset. According to many opinions, someone who failed to use the appropriate amount of fuel, resulting in the lights being extinguished before the proper time, has not fulfilled his obligation.

If you realized after kindling the menorah that there is not sufficient oil, immediately extinguish the flame, add more fuel, and then rekindle the lamp without a blessing. If you realized the error only after personally accepting Shabbos—but it is still before *shki'ah*—ask someone who has not yet accepted Shabbos to add the fuel. Similarly, if the menorah goes out before the onset of Shabbos, either rekindle it yourself or ask someone else to do so if you already accepted Shabbos.

If a woman must light the menorah today yet forgot to light it before the Shabbos candles, she may not light it herself—since it is the accepted practice that by lighting the Shabbos candles she has accepted Shabbos. In such a case, she should find someone who has not yet lit Shabbos candles (or a male who does not light) to kindle her menorah before *shki'ah*.⁵⁹

Unlike all other days of Chanukah, today it is not customary to linger beside the lit menorah for half an hour.

Before Shabbos, it is appropriate to place an object that is worth more than the flames of the menorah (such as a *challah for shabbos*) on the tray upon which the menorah stands. This makes it permissible to move the tray during Shabbos. (Some authorities are more stringent and do not allow the tray to be moved; this would require that the object be placed on the chair or table upon which the tray rests, as will be explained below).

We do not give *Chanukah gelt* on Shabbos; not even using a permissible (non-*muktzah*) object.⁶⁰ *Chanukah gelt* for Shabbos should be given Friday or Sunday.⁶¹

59) She can recite the second brachah, *she'asah nissim*, on her own. The same applies to a man who forgot to light, or had an emergency situation that precluded it—he may say the brachah of *she'asah nissim* on another menorah lit in his household.

Some authorities hold that a non-Jew may light if it is before nightfall (*bein hashmashos*), but only one candle should be lit, and no brachah is recited at all.

60) *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayeishev* 5750, *Sefer Hasichos* 5750, vol. 1, p. 194

61) *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayeshev* 5748, *Sefer Hasichos* 5748, vol. 1, p. 163. See also address to Tzivos Hashem on 28 Kislev 5750, *Sefer Hasichos* 5750, vol. 1, p. 199, “Also on Friday before the onset of Shabbos.” See also *Yechidus* on 24 Kislev, 5748.

FRIDAY NIGHT, SIXTH NIGHT OF CHANUKAH

Shabbos Rosh Chodesh

Kabbalas Shabbos is recited as usual. In addition to *V'al hanissim*, *ya'aleh veyavo* is added during Maariv. If you made a mistake, see the chart at the end of the booklet.

This Shabbos is enhanced by its concurrence with Chanukah and Rosh Chodesh and should reflect the occasion with more extras than usual at the Shabbos *seudah*. This applies also to the meal, or meals, tomorrow, post-Shabbos and Sunday.

V'al hanissim is added to *Birchas Hamazon*, as well as *Retzei* followed by *ya'aleh veyavo* and *Harachaman* for Shabbos and Rosh Chodesh. If you forgot the above, see the chart at the end of the booklet.

MENORAH CARE

Take care to avoid rushing past or opening a door directly opposite a lit menorah on Shabbos, so as to avoid extinguishing its flames.

On Shabbos, it is forbidden to directly move the menorah, even once its flames have gone out. The menorah tray and the chair or table on which the tray is placed, as items supporting a *muktzah* object, can also become *muktzah*—unless you take precautions. The tray and chair would not be able to be moved even if the menorah were subsequently removed from them.

However, if you placed a challah—or another object that is worth more than the flames of the menorah—on the tray before the onset of Shabbos, the tray (and what is underneath it) are no longer solely supporting a *muktzah* object, and once the flames have gone out, the tray—even if the menorah remains on top—may be moved directly on Shabbos.⁶²

According to other opinions, the tray has been designated for the use of the menorah and it does not help to place a challah on it before Shabbos. Rather, the valuable non-*muktzah* object must be placed on the chair (or table) on which the tray rests. Then you may then move the chair—with all that is placed on it—during Shabbos. Nevertheless, this solution works only if you need to move the chair in order to provide space to pass by, or in order to use the place in which the chair stands. The chair may not be moved in order to protect the menorah.

If you failed to neutralize the *muktzah* status of the menorah with another valuable object before Shabbos, you may still move the objects in an **indirect manner** once the menorah has gone out, such as using your body, foot, elbow, the back of a hand and the like. Similarly, if you need to use the place in which the menorah is located, you may ask a non-Jew to move it.

⁶²) There is an opinion that the *heter* of placing a permissible object does not apply to the menorah during Chanukah. Without getting into myriad details, be aware of this stringency and if possible, utilize a non-Jew or indirect handling if needed, *l'chatchilah*.

CHANUKAH MELACHOS

The dreidel should not be played on Shabbos. According to some authorities, a dreidel is possibly considered a *keli shemelachto l'issur* (object whose primary use is prohibited on Shabbos).

Chanukah gifts should not be given during Shabbos unless they are articles that are necessary for Shabbos itself.

Doughnuts and other solid foods may be squeezed on Shabbos to remove the excess oil, if the oil is discarded. However, you may not squeeze or spoon out the jelly or other filling to avoid eating them, as this transgresses the *melachah of borer*—selecting the scraps from the (desired) edibles.

Do not warm doughnuts on Shabbos, not even by placing them on top of a pot that is on the stove.

Haneiros Halalu is not sung during Shabbos.⁶³

SHABBOS PARSHAS MIKETZ, 30 KISLEV

Sixth Day of Chanukah

Shabbos Rosh Chodesh Teves

SHACHARIS

Add *ya'aleh veyavo* and *V'al hanissim* in Shacharis. If you forgot to recite *ya'aleh veyavo*, see the chart at the end of the booklet.

During Shacharis, the complete *Hallel* is followed by *V'avraham zaken*, *Kaddish tiskabel*, *Shir shel Yom* (*Mizmor shir l'yom ha-shabbos*), *Hoshi'einu*, *Barchi nafshi*, and *Kaddish Yasom*.

KRIAS HATORAH

Three *sifrei Torah* are used today. There is special significance to this occurrence (which happens, at most three times a year).⁶⁴

Parshas Mikeitz is read from the first Torah (in six *aliyos*), after which the second *sefer Torah* is placed on the *bimah* alongside the first. We may not remove the first *sefer Torah* until the second *sefer Torah* is placed on the *bimah*, so that the *bimah* should not be vacant from a mitzvah. *Hagbah* (lifting the Torah) and *gelilah* (wrapping the Torah) are performed on the first Torah. The seventh *aliyah* is read from the second *sefer Torah*. It is the reading for Rosh Chodesh (*Uv'yom hashabbos .. u'verashei chadsheichem*). Then the third Torah is placed on the *bimah* alongside

⁶³ *Shabbos Chanukah* 5742. Nevertheless, it is customary to sing its final section independently—*Al nisecha v'al niflosecha. lehodos ulehallel* etc. Indeed, the Rebbe encouraged that this part be sung on numerous such occasions.

⁶⁴ For life lessons associated with this occurrence, see *Sefer Hasichos* 5751, vol. 1, p. 379 ff. Also *Shabbos Chanukah*, 5742.

the second. *Chatzi Kaddish* is recited, and the second Torah is raised and wrapped.

Maftir is read from the third *sefer Torah*. It speaks about the offerings of the *nassi* to the tribe of Gad (*Bayom hashishi*). The third Torah is then raised and wrapped.

The *Haftorah* begins *Rani vesimchi* and describes the lights of the golden menorah as seen by Zechariah. Upon its conclusion, the following are added this year: (1)

The first and last verses from the *Haftorah* of Shabbos Rosh Chodesh. These are: *Ko amar Hashem hashamayim kisi... Vehayah midei chodesh... Veyatzu ura'u... Vehayah midei chodesh....* (2)

The first and last verses from the *Haftorah* of *Machar chodesh* are added. These are: *Vayomer lo Yehonasan machar chodesh... Vayomer Yehonasan l'Dovid leich leshalom....*⁶⁵

Av harachamim is not recited before Musaf.

MUSAF

During Musaf, the section for Shabbos Rosh Chodesh is read instead. It begins *Ata yatzarta* and ends *mekadeish hashabbos v'Yisrael veroshei chodashim*. *V'al hanissim* is also inserted into the *Amidah* of Musaf.

Someone who inadvertently concluded the blessing with the regular phrase, *mekadeish hashabbos*, has fulfilled their obligation. If you made other mistakes in Musaf, see the chart at the end of the booklet.

CREATION & THE NATION

"We are taught in *sefarim*," the Rebbe says at a farbrengen on Shabbos Rosh Chodesh,⁶⁶ "that on Yom Tov we say *Atah Bechartanu*—'You chose us...,' because Yom Tov is associated with the giving of the Torah when Hashem chose us as His Nation. This is opposed to Rosh Chodesh that falls on Shabbos, when we say *Atah Yatzarta*—'You created...,' because Shabbos commemorates Creation. Both of these occasions, Shabbos and Rosh Chodesh, precede the giving of the Torah; Rosh Chodesh was a mitzvah given to the Jewish nation while still in *Mitzrayim*. However, even though the first words of the *Amidah* prayers of Shabbos Rosh Chodesh and Yom Tov differ, they both conclude in the same vein.

"We can apply this connection to the *niggun* as well, by singing the words of *Atah Yatzarta* to the tune of *Atah Bechartanu*—let us do so now!

"And may we actually affect, through the conflation of these two ideas, we will achieve an actual merging of them; and very soon, we will reach the time when 'on every Rosh Chodesh and Shabbos, each living being will come and bow before Me, says Hashem.' As the Yalkut teaches, that when *Moshiach* comes, traveling to the *Beis Hamikdash* will occur on every Rosh Chodesh and every Shabbos — with the coming of *Moshiach Tzidkeinu*, speedily, in our days, literally."

⁶⁵) See at length, *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 35, p. 187 ff.

⁶⁶) *Shabbos Parshas Noach* 5741

The Rebbe concluded: “Everyone should look inside the *Siddur* and see what is written there.” They then sang *Atah Yatzarta* to the tune of *Atah Bechartanu*.

LAW OF REDEMPTION: EVERY ROSH CHODESH

We offer the following *korban musaf* in the *Beis Hamikdash* in honor of Rosh Chodesh: two bulls, one ram, seven lambs as burnt-offerings, and one goat for a sin-offering. These are in addition to the regularly scheduled *musafim* for Shabbos and the *Korban Tamid*.

We will all ascend to the *Beis Hamikdash* in Yerushalayim—not just three times a year, for Pesach, Shavuot and Sukkos, but also for each Shabbos and for each *Rosh Chodesh* (as it says in Navi⁶⁷). And “when Shabbos and Rosh Chodesh coincide, we will come twice in one day, one time for Shabbos, the second for Rosh Chodesh. The clouds will be boarded in early morning to bring them to Yerushalayim and they will daven there and then reboard to return home. (The *possuk* in the Navi⁶⁸ says) ‘Who will fly like a cloud?’ This refers to the early flyers. Then the *possuk* continues, ‘and like doves to their roost’, these are the Minchah arrivals.⁶⁹

ROSH CHODESH STUDY

“It is an ancient custom, on each Rosh Chodesh, to study one verse of the chapter of Tehillim that corresponds with the current years of a person’s life. The verse should be studied with the commentary of Rashi, and additional commentaries may be added as well. If the current chapter contains less than twelve verses, or in a leap year, when there are more than twelve months, verses that have been studied on a previous Rosh Chodesh should be studied a second time. Similarly, if the current chapter contains many verses, then two or three verses should be studied at once on each Rosh Chodesh of the year.”

MINCHAH

The *Amidah* includes *ya’aleh veyavo* and *V’al hanissim*. (If you omit these, see the chart at the end of the booklet.) We do not say *Tzidkascha* today.

IN HIGH GEAR FOR HAKHEL:

In *Sichas Shabbos Miktetz*, *Chanukah* 5748, the Rebbe states:

This is the year of Hakhel. In general, it is important for everything related to Chanukah to be celebrated with great publicity in the spirit of *pirsumei nisa*, “publicizing the miracle,” and, “[The *menorah* is lit] by the entrance to his home, on the outside.” During a Hakhel year, it is all the more important to ensure that Chanukah—whose theme is “a commandment is a candle and the Torah is light”—is celebrated in a manner of “Assemble the people: the men, the women, and the children.”

67) Yeshayah 10:23

68) Yeshayah 60: 8

69) From *Yalkut Shimoni* on the *possuk*, Remez 503 and discussed in *sichos* and a *maamar*.

Further in that *sichah*, the Rebbe adds:

...As is usually done, the nature of these events as well as their time and location should be announced, and everyone here should be invited to participate personally or via representative in the rallies and *farbrengens*, where (the Rebbe's) *mashke* should be distributed, and so on.

May it be Hashem's will that these *farbrengens* that are held in the spirit of Hakhel and *simchah* achieve the fulfillment of the ultimate *hakhel* and *simchah*: "You will be gathered one by one, children of Israel" and "A great assemblage will return here"—to our Holy Land, "the land which ... the eyes of Hashem are upon it from the start of the year until the end of the year," to the holy city of Yerushalayim, to the *Beis Hamikdash*, and to "eternal joy upon their heads," speedily, in our days, *amein!*

As mentioned earlier, we may not eat a meal before lighting the menorah once the time has arrived for doing so. If someone began eating earlier, when it was permissible (they washed hands for bread before sunset), they are not required to end the Shabbos meal in order to light the menorah (especially since the menorah lighting is *mid'rabanan*). Nevertheless, it would be prudent to plan ahead to avoid delaying this mitzvah, especially when attending a *farbrengen* which often involves drinking alcoholic beverages. In Chassidic communities, they follow their standard practice of extending the *seudah shlishis* beyond the official conclusion of Shabbos, as is done usually. In fact, this exact scenario occurred at the Rebbe's *farbrengen*.⁷⁰

70) *Shabbos Chanukah-Parshas Miktetz* 5744

NITTEL NACHT

The Rebbe notes that *Nittel Nacht* (Night of Nittel) occurs often during or in proximity to the days of Chanukah.¹

CUSTOMS FOR NITTUL

Be sure to complete daily study of Chitas and Rambam before sunset.

If you didn't manage to complete the learning before sunset, it should be done after midnight.

Regarding the deferment of marital relations on *Nittel*, see the footnote.²

WHAT IS NITTEL?

The name *nittel* alludes to an absence, a euphemism for birth. Some suggest it is related to the word *nitleh* and *taluy*, "the hanged one", a reference to *oso ha'ish*, the individual who is the focus of worship in the *notzri* religion. The date officially marks the birth of that man. As such, the term *nittel* can be related to the Latin *natal*,

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1) *Sefer Hasichos Shabbos Parshas Vayeishev* 5750

2) This topic is discussed in *Igros Kodesh*, vol. 12 p. 424. If it is *mikvah* night, it is better to wait until after *chatzos* (halachic midnight).

3) *Sefer Hasichos Shabbos Parshas Vayeishev* 5750

4) This topic is discussed in *Igros Kodesh*, vol. 12 p. 424. If it is *mikvah* night, it is better to wait until after *chatzos* (halachic midnight).

It is an ancient Jewish practice (which thereby becomes a venerated part of Torah) and it is also the Chabad custom, to refrain from studying Torah on *Nittel Nacht*, from sunset until halachic midnight. The reason is "to avoid adding vitality to the forces of impurity." Other reasons, offered by great Torah sages, are recorded in the books that explain the reasons for *minhagim*. The Rebbe mentions these in *Igros Kodesh* and *Likkutei Sichos*.¹ In other sources, it is explained that the phrase "to avoid adding vitality to *kelipos*" is directed at "that man" who was deified by the non-Jews as well as those who presently follow his path. See the above *Igros Kodesh* to understand how it is possible for Torah study to produce negative results.

WHEN IS NITTEL?

The timing of *Nittel Nacht* does not follow the Jewish dates, but rather, the secular calendar. The date must be determined by the observance of the local non-Jewish population. The Jews of each country observe this custom on the eve of *yom eidam* (lit. the day of their calamity, used as a metonymy for festival) as it is celebrated by the non-Jews of their country. In the United States, this sets the date as December 25th. In a location with variances in the dates for the non-Jewish *yom eidam*, *Nittel Nacht* is observed on the date that the majority of the local non-Jews celebrate.²

The willful avoidance of Torah study is a surprising and unprecedented concept. It must not be extended beyond the strict duration set by Jewish custom just one night, until midnight.

THE REBBEIM & NITTEL

Regarding the conduct of the Rebbe Rashab on *Nittel Nacht* and the implied directive, see *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayeishev* 5750: "From this we derive a directive as well as an infusion of ability to utilize the duration of *Nittel*, not to waste our time, G-d forbid (simply in order to avoid adding vitality to *kelipos*), but rather for a practical benefit. It is especially appropriate to use this time for matters that lead to increased wisdom ... or to increase in acts of *tzedakah* and *chesed*, or to take care of the home, and the like."³

In his notes from the winter of 5695, recorded in Vienna, the Rebbe relates that the Rebbe Rashab would also refrain from studying *Chassidus* on *Nittel Nacht*, even in a cursory manner. When *Nittel* coincided with the eve of Shabbos, he would defer the delivering of his customary *maamar* to Shabbos morning instead.⁴

1) *Igros Kodesh* vol. 14, p. 351; *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 15, p. 554

2) See footnotes to *Sefer Hasichos* 5750, vol. 1, p. 192

3) Printed in *Sefer Hasichos*. See further in the original *sichah*.

4) For more on this topic, see *Heichal Menachem*, p. 268. However, refer to the *reshimah* of Chof Kislev 5693. Also take note of a short *Sichah* delivered on *Leil Gimmel d'Chanukah* 5750.

Regarding the *mitzvah* of a *mikveh* night that coincides with *nittel*, see *Igros Kodesh*, vol. 12, p. 424.

MOTZOEI SHABBOS, SEVENTH NIGHT OF CHANUKAH

Rosh Chodesh Teves

Shabbos ends at 5:19 pm.

MAARIV

Maariv should not be delayed more than usual tonight.

Recite *Ata chonantanu, ya'aleh veyavo* and *V'al hanissim* in Maariv. *V'hi no'am* is recited as usual at the conclusion.

In shul, the menorah is lit before reciting *Aleinu*. It is followed by *Haneiros Halalu, Aleinu*, etc., and then *Havdalah* by the *chazzan*. It is necessary to verify that the one kindling the shul menorah did not forget to recite *Ata Chonantanu* in the *Amidah*. If he did, he must recite *Baruch hamavdil bein kodesh lechol* before kindling the menorah.

Despite the general ban on Torah learning, a mourner recites the usual Mishnayos.

MENORAH LIGHTING

Needless to say, the menorah is lit only at the conclusion of Shabbos. Hurry home from shul in order to avoid delaying the menorah lighting more than absolutely necessary.

At home, first recite *Havdalah*, then light the menorah, and only then recite *Veyiten lecha*.

MEALS & GELT

Partake of a Melava Malka meal, as on every *motzoei Shabbos*, enhanced by extra celebration for Chanukah and Rosh Chodesh. During the Melava Malka meal we may sing *niggunim* and *zemiros* as usual and tell stories of tzaddikim,⁷¹ but refrain from saying words of Torah, including Chassidus.

In *Birchas Hamazon*, *V'al Hanissim* and *ya'aleh veyavo* are recited, as well as *Harachaman* for Rosh Chodesh.

It seems that Chabad custom is to ensure that the *menorah's* lights remain burning for at least 50 minutes on *motzoei Shabbos* as well, even though they are lit after nightfall.

There are some people here who are careful to avoid dealing with money on *motzoei Shabbos*.⁷² In a *yechidus kelalis* in 5748, the Rebbe explains that this concern should not apply to Chanukah *gelt* because it is associated with a mitzvah and is used as a tool to advance children's education. The Rebbe noted that it could be discussed on *motzoei Shabbos* that money be spent only the following

⁷¹) Indeed, Rabbi Weinberg would tell *Sippurei Chassidim* on *Nittel* over the radio, in place of his weekly Tanya shiur.

⁷²) see *Sichas Ohr L'yud Gimmel Nissan 5743* (and numerous other *sichos*).

morning.⁷³ The following year, the Rebbe took an alternative approach and concluded that it is appropriate to refrain from actually giving the *gelt* on *motzoei Shabbos*.⁷⁴

SUNDAY, 1 TEVES

Seventh Day of Chanukah

Rosh Chodesh Teves

SHACHARIS

Add *ya'aleh veyavo* and *V'al hanissim* in Shacharis. If you forgot to recite *ya'aleh veyavo*, see the chart at the end of the booklet.

The **complete** Hallel is followed by *V'avraham Zaken*, *Kaddish tiskabel*, *Shir shel Yom* (*Rishon bashabbos*), *Hoshi'einu*, *Barchi nafshi*, and *Kaddish Yasom*.

KRIAS HATORAH

Two *sifrei Torah* are read during Shacharis. The first is used for the Rosh Chodesh reading and requires three *aliyos*. (Kohen until *revi'is hahin*, Levi until *veniska*, and Yisrael—*Uv'roshei chadsheichem* until *venisko*.) The second Torah is then placed on the *bimah* beside the first.

After *hagbah* on the first Torah, one *aliyah* is read from the second Torah, from *Parshas Naso* (*Bayom hashvi'i* etc., but no further).

The Torah reading is followed by *chatzi Kaddish*; *hagbah* and *gelilah*; *Ashrei* and *Uva letziyon*—the *chazzan* does not conclude *Uva letziyon* aloud. That is followed by *Yehalelu* and the return of the Torah to the *aron*. The *tefillin* are then removed, *Rabbeinu Tam tefillin* are worn and then removed before continuing with *Musaf*.

The *chazzan* should recite a chapter of *Tehillim* before beginning *chatzi Kaddish* for *Musaf*. *V'al hanissim* is added to *Musaf*.

ROSH CHODESH OBSERVANCES

On Rosh Chodesh, it is customary not to cut hair, as per the *tzavaah* of Rabbi Yehudah Hachasid. (Note that the *tzavaah* mentions not cutting nails too. This requires further elaboration.)

LAW OF REDEMPTION: WOOD ENDOWMENT

Specific families merited to donate wood annually for use on the altar, as described in *Ta'anis* 4:5. On the first of Teves, the family of Parosh donated wood. They actually had an earlier date in the year as well, on the fifth of Menachem-Av.⁷⁵

73) 24 Kislev, 5748

74) *Sichah* on the eve of 23 Kislev, 5749

75) See *Tosefos Yom Tov* to the Mishnah, and *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 4, p. 1105, fn. 9. However, note Rashi's

In Minchah, both *ya'aleh veyavo* and *V'al hanissim* are included.

SUNDAY NIGHT, EIGHTH NIGHT OF CHANUKAH

Zos Chanukah

In *Sichos Kodesh*, the Rebbe urges each person to utilize the remaining hours of the eve of *Zos Chanukah* for *mitvza Chanukah*. See more details below in entries for the day of *Zos Chanukah*.

OIL DISPOSAL

Oil and wicks that remain in the menorah after the conclusion of Chanukah should be burned, since they had been designated for a mitzvah.

Oil that remains in its container and has not been poured into the menorah may be used in any manner—it has not acquired sanctity at all.

MONDAY, 2 TEVES, EIGHTH DAY OF CHANUKAH

Zos Chanukah

For today's Torah reading, the Kohen's *aliyah* is from *Bayom hashemini* until *melei'ah ketores*. Levi is from *Par echad* until *ben pedatzhur*. Yisrael is from *Bayom hatshi'i* until *kein asa es hamenorah*.

THIS IS IT!

In *Sichos Kodesh*, the Rebbe instructs each person to use this special day—when all eight flames of the menorah shine forth—to bring *mitvza Chanukah* to its climax. The Rebbe urges whoever has not yet observed the custom of giving *Chanukah gelt* to grab the opportunity now, in the final hours and minutes of Chanukah. Failing that, he should make it up on the night following Chanukah, or in the coming days—the sooner the better. Even those who have already given *gelt* should use the final day of Chanukah to give even more, because there is basis to question whether they have indeed given enough, especially in light of the great *Chassidische nachas* that they receive from their sons and daughters—the *nachas* that they will receive in the future through increasing their Jewish education from this point onwards.

COUNT THIS

The Rebbe also instructed that on this final day of Chanukah, we should take stock of our entire Chanukah in a manner that will continue to positively influence our service throughout the year, in actuality. Resolve to advance in all matters of Torah and mitzvos. The ideal way to launch this process is with a *farbrengen*.

comment in *Eiruvim* 41a, s.v., *mib'nei sanav*, which implies that the donation was arranged through lottery.

LEARN THIS

The Rebbe once instructed that the Alter Rebbe's *maamar* that explains the greatness of Zos Chanukah be studied today.⁷⁶ The main point, the Rebbe explained, is to live with this *maamar*.

THIS BRACHAH

On Zos Chanukah 5713, the Rebbe said, "It is stated in the books of the Chassidim of Poland (and although it most likely appears somewhere in Chabad Chassidus, I have not yet located such a teaching) that the eighth day of Chanukah—"Zos Chanukah"—is a day of special blessing for resolving fertility issues."⁷⁷

On Zos Chanukah 5734 (a **Hakhel year**), the Rebbe said: "The (Friediker) Rebbe explained in *Sichas Yud-Tes Kislev* 5704, that the concepts of *erev Rosh Hashanah*, the days of *Selichos*, the month of Elul, and so on, are also present regarding the Rosh Hashanah of Chassidus, *Yud-Tes Kislev*. It is also understood that after the *kesivah* (inscribing) that occurs on *Yud-Tes Kislev*, there follows the concept of *chasimah* (sealing), similar to the *chasimah* of Yom Kippur that comes as a result of the *kesivah* of Rosh Hashanah.

"The Rebbe explains further that this *chasimah* that follows *Yud-Tes Kislev* occurs during Chanukah, which is why the Alter Rebbe returned home after his liberation during Chanukah.

"He also mentions that this teaching runs parallel to a teaching recorded in *Poilishe sefarim* (works of other Chassidic streams) that Chanukah marks the *gmar chasimah* (final sealing) of the judgments [of Tishrei]. The Rebbe explained that he quotes the works of *Poilishe sefarim* because in this case, the teaching concurs with the teachings of Chabad Chassidus."⁷⁸

See also *Igros Kodesh*: "It was a common teaching in Poland that ... the *gmar chasimah* occurs in the month of Kislev, during Chanukah."⁷⁹

AFTER DARK

Anyone who began a meal on the last day of Chanukah that extends until nightfall, or even several hours into the night, should recite *V'al hanissim* during *Birchas Hamazon*.⁸⁰ That is, only if at least a *kezayis* of food was eaten before

76) see *Likkutei Torah Derushim Leshemini Atzeres*

77) For further explanation, see the original *sichah*.

78) This portion of *Sichas Yud-Tes Kislev* 5734 can be heard in the digital recording of the *farbrengen*, although it does not appear in the printed version of that address.

79) vol. 14, p. 112. See also *Likkutei Torah Derushim Leshemini Atzeres* (p. 88b), explained in *Bayom Hashemini* 5746 (in particular, see fn. 33), to the effect that the eighth day of Chanukah is like *Shemini Atzeres* (the eighth day of Sukkos). See also *Sichas Zos Chanukah* 5738.

80) In general, one's obligations depend on the circumstances at the start of the meal. In this case, the meal began during Chanukah, and therefore, the obligation to mention Chanukah during *Birchas Hamazon* does not expire even if Chanukah has already ended.

sheki'ah, and also, if Maariv has not been recited during the meal.⁸¹ If a *kezayis* had not been eaten before *sheki'ah*, *V'al hanissim* is not said.

TUESDAY, 3 TEVES

Today's portion of Chumash in Chitas study ends with the verse, "And they told him all of Yosef's words... and the spirit of their father Yaakov was revived"⁸² as per Chabad custom.⁸³

Chanukah's influence continues today, despite the lack of an official *Isru Chag*.⁸⁴

LAW OF REDEMPTION: ANOTHER DAY?

Some authorities, such as *Minchas Chinuch*,⁸⁵ are of the opinion that in the Era of Redemption, when the Jewish people will return to establishing their calendar according to human sightings of new moons, Chanukah will then be observed by distant Jewish communities as a nine-day festival, due to unavailability of real-time updates of the calendar decisions made by the *Beis Din* in Eretz Yisrael.

In *Sichas Zos Chanukah* 5738, the Rebbe states that even a suggested approach found within Torah sources remains an integral part of the Torah. Since there is some debate over a future nine-day Chanukah, we should continue to apply the themes of Zos Chanukah on the following day. The Rebbe even compares the day after Zos Chanukah to Simchas Torah that follows the eight days of Sukkos and was established due to the inability of ancient Diaspora communities to obtain real-time updates from the *Beis Din* in Eretz Yisrael.⁸⁶

Nevertheless, the Rebbe clarifies in *Sichas Simchas Torah* 5749, that in the Era of Redemption, uncertainties regarding the true calendar dates will simply not exist. The *Beis Din* of the future will be able to instantly communicate their decisions to every location, regardless of geographic distance. It is only those festivals that in ancient times were allotted an extra day in the Diaspora due to the delay in long-distance communications,

81) Or even just the nighttime *Shema* of Maariv. See sources in www.asktherav.com 24793

82) 45:27

83) See entry for *Shabbos Parshas Vayigash*. See also the *sichah* of 5 Teves, 5747.

84) In *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Mikeitz* 5733, the Rebbe discusses a paradox: On one hand, *halachah* does not call for an *isru chag* extension of Chanukah, whereas from a spiritual perspective, *Chazal* state that the Chanukah lights "are never nullified." Indeed, their entire purpose, as explained in *Chassidus*, is to extend and draw their light across the entire coming year.

See also *Sichas Motzoei Zos Chanukah* 5735, regarding the powerful nostalgia for Chanukah that is experienced upon its conclusion. There is no *Isru Chag*, and it is not customary to extend a meal into the night, beyond the conclusion of Chanukah (unlike Purim, where it is customary to extend the meal into the subsequent night hours). Nevertheless, we can still study Chanukah topics, and further increase in "a mitzvah is a lamp and Torah is light." (See there at length.)

Also: "Although *Chazal* did not establish an *Isru Chag* (which is a subject for analysis and *pilpul*), the closer in time we are to [the conclusion of] Chanukah, the more discernible is its influence. This is especially true of the first day following Chanukah." (*Sichas Zos Chanukah* 5749.)

85) Mitzvah 301:6

86) See also *Sichas Purim* 5719 regarding the theory of a nine-day Chanukah.

and that have been observed as two-day festivals by millennia of Jews, that may possibly continue to be observed as two-day festivals even in the era of Redemption.

LAW OF REDEMPTION: SEASON’S END?

Once Chanukah has ended, *bikkurim* (First Fruit) may no longer be brought to the *Beis Hamikdash*. Fruit that ripens after Chanukah are considered as belonging to the following year, insofar as the laws of *bikkurim* are concerned, and they must be kept until after Shavuot. This is because the Torah specifies that *bikkurim* must be “that which you bring from your land,” meaning that *bikkurim* may be brought only as long as the same species are still found growing across the Land of Israel—“when they are still available for the beast of the field.” After Chanukah, however, fruit is no longer found growing in the fields and orchards.

This raises the question of the *bikkurim* season in the Future Era,⁸⁷ when fruit will indeed be found growing in the field even after Chanukah. For “trees will bring forth fruit every day,”⁸⁸ and “the ploughman will encounter the reaper” due to the instant and constant growth of produce.⁸⁹

There is also room to debate the obligation of *bikkurim* regarding fruit that grows miraculously.

THURSDAY, 5 TEVES

Didan Notzach

“Behold, it came to pass in the twelfth year, in the tenth [month], on the fifth [day] of the month of our exile, that the fugitive from Yerushalayim came to me, saying, ‘The city was struck!’”⁹⁰ Rashbi considered this day on which the news of the tragedy arrived as if it were the day of the event itself.⁹¹

*Shalshelless Hayachas*⁹² states: “In the year 5747 ... on the fifth of Teves, we experienced a *didan natzach* (complete victory) that was revealed for all the nations to see through a federal court ruling regarding (ownership of) the books and manuscripts of our Rebbeim that are housed in the Lubavitch Library.”

Today’s entry in *Luach Colel Chabad* reads: “The date of *Didan Natzach*. In 5747 (1987), the Federal Court vindicated the claim lodged by *Agudas Chassidei Chabad* with regard to the Previous Rebbe’s library. The Rebbe declared the date to be an auspicious day for all generations to come. The Rebbe also called on us to add to and expand the library of *Agudas Chassidei Chabad-Lubavitch*.”

87) see Yechezkel 44:30, and a similar theme in 20:40

88) *Shabbos* 30b

89) *Amos* 9:14. See *Toras Kohanim, Bechukosai* 26:4. See *Sefer Hasichos* 5741, vol. 2 (p. 743, fn. 70 and p. 809, fn. 131)

90) Yechezkel 33:21

91) *Rosh Hashanah* 18a. See *Turei Aven* there. The Rebbe explains all this in footnotes to *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 15, p. 555.

92) included in the introduction to *Hayom Yom*

BOOKS, BOOKS & MORE BOOKS

“During these days,” the Rebbe stated, “We must add greater vigor to our Torah study. For the true victory of the books is the increased Torah study that results—especially public Torah classes, in the spirit of the Mishnah’s statement regarding ten who sit and occupy themselves with Torah.

“Our study must lead to action: In *nigleh*, we must study the laws that are necessary for practical application (these are found in Rambam and similar works). In the inner dimension of Torah, we must study Chassidus that allows us to observe the *mitzvos* with complete love and awe of Hashem.

“The individual home of each and every Jew must also house the fundamental books of *Yiddishkeit* (in addition to a *Chitas*), and especially books that record the practical laws relevant to daily life, so that everyone can determine what they must do.”

In the year 5749, the Rebbe marked Hei Teves by distributing an additional dollar to all who approached him as his participation in their acquiring new *sefarim* or in the repair of their worn *sefarim*.

SEFARIM SALES

The Rebbe repeatedly encouraged booksellers to offer special discounts on all sacred literature to make it feasible for everyone to buy *sefarim*.

HAKHEL DISCOUNT

In *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayigash, Hei Teves 5748*, the Rebbe states:

“I propose that *sefarim* publishers and vendors be approached and encouraged to announce a **special discount**...on all *sefarim* that relate to every area of Torah knowledge, in connection with the year of Hakhel regarding which the Torah instructs, “*You shall read this Torah ... and they will observe to do all the words of this Torah.*” This is accomplished through studying Torah works that offer a reader clear explanation of the *mitzvos* and knowledge of practical laws.

REDEEM MORE BOOKS

On Shabbos Parshas Vayigash 5752, in connection with Hey Teves, the Rebbe said: “There still remain books and manuscripts of my father-in-law, the (Frierdiker) Rebbe and his father, the Rebbe (Rashab) in captivity in that country (Russia) and have still not yet returned to their rightful place, despite their government ordering that they release them.

(“There is a non-Jew who tampers with this; there is a Jew who also meddles—woe to them! However, since it is Shabbos, we will [refrain from elaborating] and speak of only good and favorable matters.)

”What can each of us as individuals actually do to quicken the redemption and return of these books and manuscripts? The response is simple: everyone—men, women and children take action paralleling this, by bringing to their home and

personal library newly printed holy books (and writings) of Torah words in addition to those already in his possession as part of (the campaign for) a houseful of *sefarim*.”

For the Rebbe's *sichos* regarding Hey Teves that occurs in a year with an identical calendar sequence to the present, see *Shabbos Vayigash* 5752.⁹³ Regarding the connection of Hey Teves and Hakhel, see the *sichah* of Hey Teves 5748.⁹⁴

FRIDAY, 6 TEVES

Today we recite *shnayim mikra v'echad targum* for *Parshas Vayigash*.

Check your pockets on *erev Shabbos* before the onset of *Shabbos*. This is especially important for those who wore the same *Shabbos-Yom Tov* garments this week in honor of *Hey Teves*.

Candle lighting is at **4:19 pm**.

SHABBOS PARSHAS VAYIGASH, 7 TEVES

The Rebbe states that “according to Jewish custom (which becomes part of the Torah), the third Torah portion ends with the verse ‘And they told him all of Yosef’s words ... and the spirit of their father Yaakov was revived’.⁹⁵ (According to alternative custom, this is the end of the fourth portion.)”⁹⁶ The significance of this is explained there at length, and this is indeed the practice in 770.

According to Ashkenazi custom, the *chazzan* does not announce an approaching fast during the preceding *Shabbos*. May the approaching fast be transformed into a *Yom Tov*!

MOTZOEI SHABBOS, EVE OF 8 TEVES

Shabbos ends at **5:24 pm**.

Kiddush Levanah is recited tonight following *Maariv*. *Kiddush Levanah* should be recited while dressed in fine, respectable clothing. According to Kabbalah, it should not be recited until seven days have passed from the *molad* (birth of the new moon).⁹⁷

93) published in *Sefer Hasichos* pg.209ff.

94) published in *Sefer Hasichos* pg. 188ff.

95) 45:27

96) *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 30, p. 224

97) See *Sefer Hasichos* 5752 vol. 1, p. 68. Regarding the precise calculation of these seven days, see references that appear in the Rebbe Rashab's notes to *Siddur Torah Ohr*, and references that appear in the Rebbe's notes to *Sha'ar HaKollel*. Also see *Sichas Vav Adar Rishon* 5746.

TODAY IN HISTORY⁹⁸

On the eighth of Teves, the Torah was first translated into Greek by order of King Ptolmey. This caused “three days of darkness to descend upon the world.”⁹⁹ That day was “as difficult for the Jews as the day on which the Golden Calf was made.”¹⁰⁰ The Rebbe explains this concept in *Likkutei Sichos* and *Sefer Hasichos* 5752.¹⁰¹

On this day in 5573 (1812), the Alter Rebbe reached the village of Pienna after fleeing Liadi to escape Napoleon’s advance into Russia. (The Alter Rebbe passed away in Pienna soon after on Chof-Daled Teves.)

Today is the *yahrtzeit* of Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka, the wife of the Tzemach Tzedek. She passed away in the year 5621 (1860) and is buried in the town of Lubavitch.

MONDAY, 9 TEVES

Chazal state that the ninth of Teves is one of the dates on which calamities befell our ancestors and it is appropriate to spend the day fasting. They also note, however, that there is no record of what these calamities were.¹⁰² It has since been explained that Ezra *Hasofer* passed away on this date. The commentators to *Megillas Taanis* describe additional events. The Rebbe’s explanation appears in *Sefer Hasichos* 5749.¹⁰³

MONDAY NIGHT, EVE OF 10 TEVES**A day of Rejoicing-to-be**

The Rebbe often mentions that the preparations for Yud Shevat begin thirty days in advance, from the tenth of Teves.

NIGHT UN-FAST

On the eve of the tenth of Teves 5752, the Rebbe explains that although the tenth of Teves begins at night (as is the case with all Jewish dates), the actual fast only begins at dawn. The lack of fasting on the eve of the tenth of Teves symbolizes the power that is granted at that time to reverse the negative events that the fast day commemorates. It is an auspicious time for *teshuvah* that will bring the Redemption and a night of opportunity to forever nullify the fast before it begins. The Rebbe pointed out that the night stretches for a number of hours, which offers ample time for *teshuvah*.

98) In a *yechidus* with Mr. Peter Kalms, the Rebbe spoke about a Jew’s approach to the secular new year. See the book, *Guidance from the Rebbe*, for a record of this discussion.

99) *Megillas Ta’anis*, quoted in *Shulchan Aruch*

100) *Maseches Sofrim*

101) *Likkutei Sichos*, beginning of vol. 24; *Sefer Hasichos* 5752, *Parshas Mikeitz*

102) *Megillas Ta’anis*, quoted in *Shulchan Aruch*

103) *Vayigash*, 9 Teves

STARTING THE FAST

As is the case with any fast that begins in the morning, we are permitted to eat throughout the night until dawn, provided that we had not gone to sleep in between. Dozing off temporarily is not considered going to sleep in this regard. You may also eat or drink if you stipulate before going to sleep that you intend to awaken before dawn. Someone who regularly rises from their sleep to drink at night, may do so tonight even without a stipulation

Nevertheless, from within a (halachic) half hour of dawn (*alos hashachar*) it is forbidden to eat a meal or wash for bread. It is permitted only to snack on fruits or vegetables, drink as much non-alcoholic beverages as you wish, or eat a quantity of *mezonos* the size of *kebeitzah* (the volume that would fit in 2 small matchboxes) but not more.

TUESDAY, 10 TEVES

Fast of Asarah B'Teves

A day of Rejoicing-to-be.

The fast commemorates the date on which the king of Babylon laid siege to Yerushalayim.

The Rebbe explains the association between the Tenth of Teves and the year of Hakhel in *Sichas Asarah BaTeves* 5741.

WHO FASTS

All men (from the age of thirteen years) and women (from the age of twelve years) should refrain from eating and drinking from daybreak until nightfall. Those who wish to wake up early and eat before daybreak should have in mind to do so before retiring the night before. Pregnant or nursing women who have difficulty fasting, or people feeling ill, are exempt.

A bride and groom during *Sheva Brachos* are not exempt from fasting, nor a father whose son is circumcised that day. (At the ceremony, the wine is given to a young child to drink and the *seudah* is held when the fast is over.) Someone who is exempt from fasting for health reasons, should eat only what is required and not indulge for pleasure.

Dawn, the start of the fast, is at **5:52 am**.

LAW OF REDEMPTION: FROM THE FIRST

All of the fast days (except Yom Kippur) will be canceled in the era of Moshiach. In fact, they will become "yomim tovim and days of feasting and gladness." This is further

discussed in *Likkutei Sichos*, and the Rebbe draws particular relevance to the Fast of Teves.¹⁰⁴

The Rebbe explains that the events marked by the Fast of Teves were the start and eventual cause of the calamities commemorated by the remaining fasts. Therefore, when the Fast of Teves is transformed into a Yom Tov, all other fast days are consequently transformed along with it into “*yomim tovim* and days of feasting and gladness.”¹⁰⁵

Tzedakah: It is customary to increase *tzedakah* on fast days. According to custom, a person should estimate the average cost of their daily meals and donate that amount to *tzedakah* on the eve of the fast.

FASTING

We do not rinse our mouths on a fast day.

Someone who accidentally eats today is nevertheless obligated to complete the fast. In such a case, there is no obligation of compensation, meaning that there is no requirement to fast on a subsequent day. Nevertheless, they may choose to do so as an atonement for breaking a fast.

If you only ate a small amount of food accidentally (less than the size of *koseves* [a large date], eaten within the time frame of *bichdei achilas pras*, or about four minutes), or drank a small quantity of liquid (less than a *revi'is*, approximately 3 ounces), it is still considered fasting and the *Aneinu* prayer in the *Amidah* may be recited. If, however, these limits were exceeded, the *Aneinu* text should be amended to read: *Aneinu beyom tzom hata'anis zeh* (“Answer us on this fast day”), rather than *ta'aniseinu* (“our fasting”).

SHACHARIS & MINCHAH

In Shacharis (and later, at Minchah), the *chazzan* adds *Aneinu* in the *Amidah*, between the blessings of *go'eil Yisrael* and *Refa'einu*.¹⁰⁶ If he omitted *Aneinu*, see the chart at the end of the booklet.

This is the order for Shacharis: *Tachanun*, *Selichos* (starting with *Ki im Hashem* and omitting *Ashamnu*), *Avinu Malkeinu* for fast days, *Va'anachnu lo neida* followed by *chatzi Kaddish*. *Kel erech apayim* is not said. This is followed by the reading of the Torah. The *aliyos* are read from the section of *Vayechal Moshe*.

When a *chassan* is present for the prayers, or if a *bris* will be held, or the like, the custom practiced in 770¹⁰⁷ is for the congregation to proceed with *Selichos* but to

104) *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 15, p. 412. For the concept of holding a festive meal in the era of Redemption, see *Magen Avraham*, *Tisha b'Av*, 552:11 and *Sichas Beis d'Rosh Hashanah* 5752.

105) *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 25, p. 449

106) If there are less than a minyan of fasters, see the Hebrew footnote regarding if and how the *chazzan* should recite *Aneinu*.

107) Over the years, the Rebbe issued varying directives to various individuals regarding this matter, which makes the topic too lengthy to analyze here. The current practice is as we have described.

omit *Viduy*, *Tachanun*, and *Avinu malkeinu* from the prayers.¹⁰⁸

It is preferable to daven Minchah earlier so that it does not run into *bein hashmoshos* (between sunset and nightfall), finishing before *shki'ah*. In addition to the fact that it is appropriate to daven Minchah before *shkiah* every day, on a fast day specifically this is the correct thing to do. In the event that someone does daven late, he may still conduct *Krias Hatorah* and *Maftir* even once it has reached *bein hashmoshos*.

During Minchah, each individual recites *Aneinu* in *Shema Koleinu*. If you forgot to recite it, see the chart at the end of the booklet.

The *chazzan*, when repeating the *Amidah* out loud, recites the *Aneinu* prayer before beginning the paragraph of *Refa'einu*.

The *chazzan* recites *Birchas Kohanim* in his repetition of the *Amidah* (as he usually does during *Shacharis*).

This is the order for Minchah: *Korbanos*, then *Ashrei* followed by *chatzi Kaddish*. The reading of the Torah (*Vayechal*) and the *Haftorah* of *Dirshu Hashem* follow. Next, *Yehalelu* followed by *chatzi Kaddish* and the *Amidah* with the addition of *Aneinu*; *Tachanun*, *Avinu malkeinu* for fast days and then *Va'anachnu lo neida. Kaddish tiskabel. Aleinu* followed by *Kaddish Yasom* and then *Al tira* and *Ach tzadikim*. If an *avel* is present, he recites *Mishnayos* followed by *Kaddish D'rabbanan*.

After Minchah, it is customary to listen to *divrei kivushin*—a speech urging self-improvement and further advancement in the service of Hashem.

Traveling: Someone who travels to a different time zone during the fast continues to fast until nightfall (*tzeis hakochovim*) in the place that they are at that time.

The fast ends at **5:12 pm**.¹⁰⁹

FRIDAY, 13 TEVES

Today we recite *shnayim mikra v'echad targum* for *Parshas Vayechi*.

Candle lighting is at **4:25 pm**.

108) There is no interference with the order of the *Selichos* itself; the congregation begins with *Selach lanu*, and also recites the *viduy* part of *Selichos (Ashamnu)* as usual. It is only the *Tachanun*, etc., that are recited as part of *Shacharis* that are skipped on such an occasion—and this concession is sufficient recognition of the *chassan's* presence, or of the *bris* that will take place.

109) There are various methods of calculating the time of nightfall (called *tzeis hakochovim*, when three stars are observable). Following the Alter Rebbe's opinion to account for "smaller stars" we generally wait some minutes after this time to say the nighttime *Shema*. But for the purpose of the fast, you may daven earlier, and then repeat the *Shema* sometime later.

FRIDAY NIGHT, 14 TEVES

This is the last possible opportunity to say *Kiddush Levanah* for this month's lunar cycle. Although we generally avoid reciting it on Friday night, you may say it if you failed to do so before tonight.¹¹⁰ It should ideally be said before **10:34 pm**.

Tekufas Teves: The winter season in the Jewish calendar (marked by the vernal equinox) begins on **tonight**, at 10:30 pm.¹¹¹

SHABBOS PARSHAS VAYECHI, 14 TEVES

Shabbos Chazak

During today's Torah reading, it is customary to rise for the reading of the final verse in the book of Bereishis, after which the entire congregation (men, women, and children) calls out loudly and joyfully—*Chazak, chazak, venischazeik!* This shout symbolizes the strength of the Jewish people in all matters of Torah—with the additional strength of a *chazakah*.

The one who is called to the Torah for the seventh *aliyah* should join the rest of the congregation in proclaiming *chazak*. This is not considered an interruption in the reading, because it is considered part of the final verse's reading process.

FARBRENGEN & HACHLATAH

It is customary for the *gabbaim* to organize a special *farbrengen* on this Shabbos, beyond the ordinary Shabbos *farbrengen*. They should use this opportunity to discuss and encourage strengthening of all aspects of Torah and mitzvos.

On this Shabbos, it is customary to increase in *divrei Torah* and to rejoice at having completed an entire *sefer*, and to make resolutions to increase in Torah study and to keep the mitzvos in the best possible way.

NOT ENOUGH!

In *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayechi* 5750, the Rebbe cautioned: "Strong encouragement is particularly necessary in this shul (770). It is necessary to clarify that the participants in the present *farbrengen* have not fulfilled their obligation of holding a special *farbrengen*. I am therefore forced to emphasize and encourage, because I do not want them to depend on me, claiming that due to the present *farbrengen* there will not be a special *farbrengen* held by the *gabboim* in honor of Shabbos Chazak."

110) See Hebrew section for sources; also www.asktherav.com 1299

111) The *tefukos*-seasons are mentioned in the introduction to the calendar in *Hayom Yom* and in *Luach Colel Chabad*. For detailed laws, see *Beis Yosef, Orach Chayim*, 455 (end); *Rema, ibid.*, par. 1; (Alter Rebbe's *Shulchan Aruch, ibid.*, par. 15-16, and in 206:14); *Yoreh De'ah*, 116:5; and many other places. See *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 16, p. 98, fn. 33; vol. 21, p. 233, fn. 33; vol. 16, p. 577.

MOTZOEI SHABBOS, EVE OF 15 TEVES

Shabbos ends at 5:30 pm.

REAL MELAVA MALKA

"... Starting with the festive meal of *motzoei Shabbos* ... 'The meal of Dovid, King Moshiach' ... Certainly, then the *melave malka* should be truly magnificent! Moreover, and this is the most crucial point, we should hold the meal with Dovid King Moshiach at our head!"¹¹²

SUNDAY, 15 TEVES

During these weeks (from when we begin reading the book of *Shemos*), the order of fasting, praying, and extra stringencies known as *shovavim* begins. To view this practice in the light of Chabad Chassidus, see *Sefer Hasichos* 5749 and other sources.¹¹³

112) *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayechi* 5752

113) *Sefer Hasichos* 5749, fn. to p. 185. Also see *Igros Kodesh* vol. 18, p. 259, and *LeSheima Ozen* p. 130.

“Oops! I made a mistake...”

What did I do?

When did I remember?

Now I should...

Chanukah Candle Lighting



Notes

1. a short span of uninterrupted time it would take to say the words, "Shalom alecha, Mori v'Rabbi"

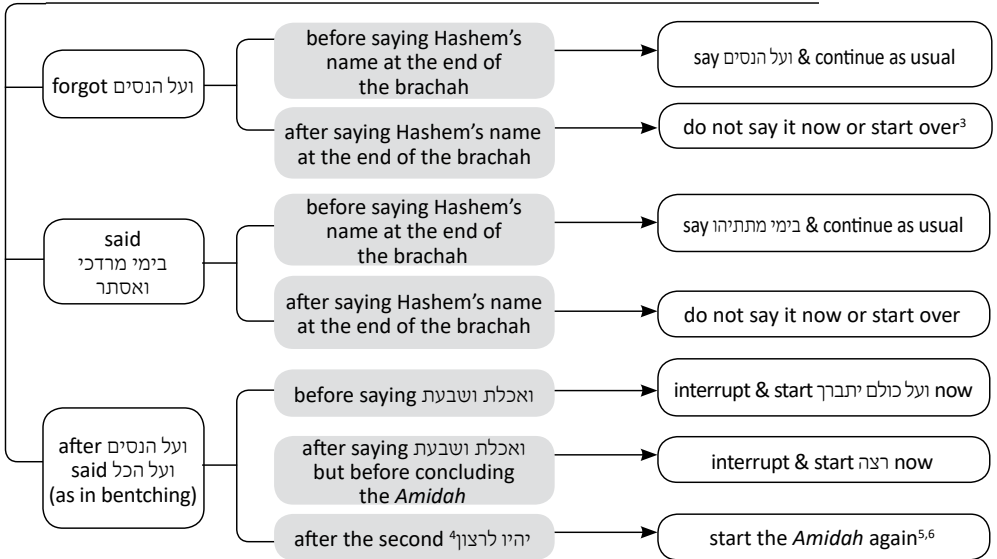
2. by speaking about something that is not connected with the mitzvah at hand

What did I do?

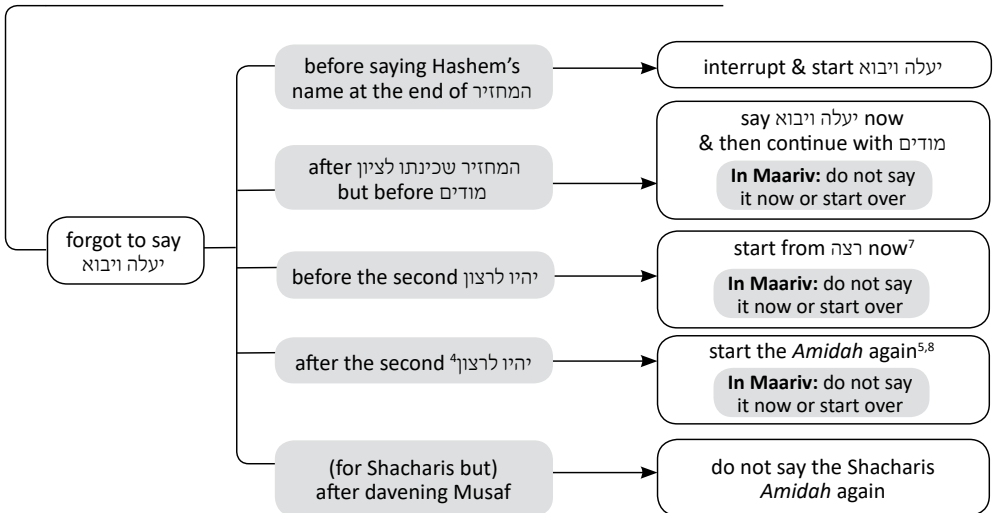
When did I remember?

Now I should...

Chanukah Amidah • Maariv, Shacharis, Musaf & Minchah



Rosh Chodesh Amidah • Maariv, Shacharis & Minchah



Notes

- 3. According to some opinions, you should say the following before the second יהיו לרצון:
הרחמנו הוא יעשה לנו נסים, כמו שעשה לאבותינו בימים ההם בזמן הזה. בימי מתתיהו...
- 4. and you also made the decision not to lengthen your tefillah with extra requests and supplications.
- 5. You must first wait *K'dei hiluch daled amos* (the time it takes to walk six feet) before restarting the Amidah.
- 6. On *motzoei Shabbos*: repeat אתה חוננתנו. On Rosh Chodesh: repeat ועל הנסים יעלה ויבוא. need not be repeated.

- 7. If you remembered after reciting Hashem's name at the end of the brachah of the Shabbos, say המברך את עמו ישראל בשלום or הטוב שמך and go back to רצה.
- 8. There is no need to repeat ועל הנסים. On *motzoei Shabbos*: repeat אתה חוננתנו. If you have already removed your tefillin (during Shacharis) you should preferably don them again.

What did I do?

When did I remember?

Now I should...

Musaf Amidah • Shabbos & Rosh Chodesh



Notes

9. or if you are unsure what you said.

10. על הנסים יש צורך לומר.

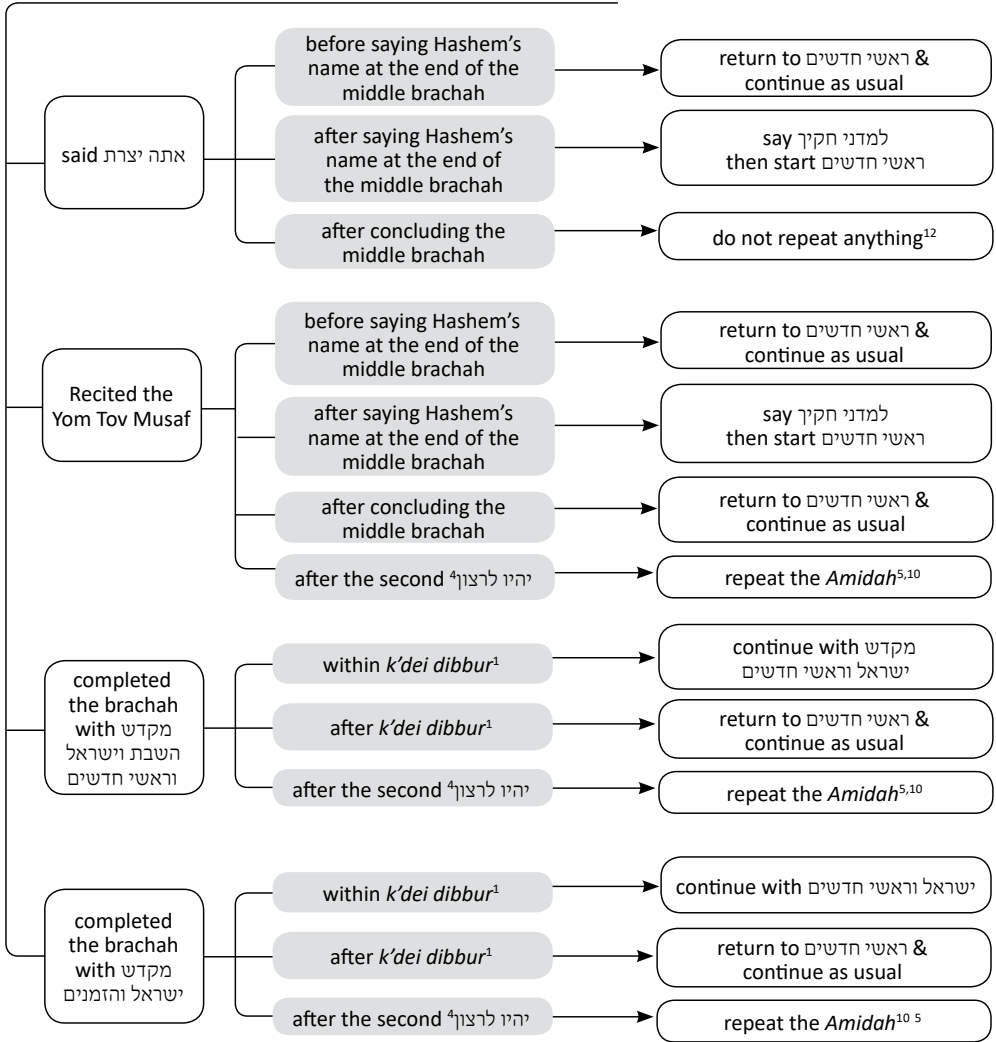
11. It is still best to listen to the *chazzan's* repetition with the intent to be *yotzeh* through him.

What did I do?

When did I remember?

Now I should...

Musaf Amidah • 2nd Day of Rosh Chodesh



Notes

12. if you concluded in the correct way with מקדש ישראל וראשי חדשים. It is still best to listen to the chazzan's repetition with the intent to be *yotzeh* through him.

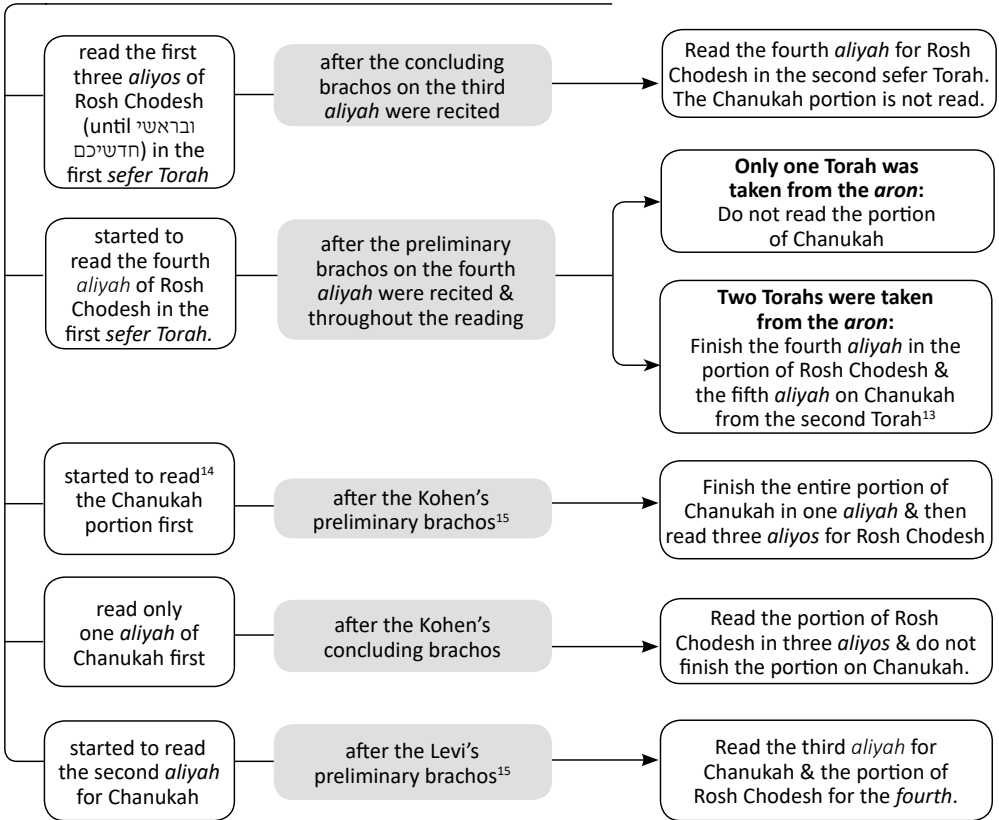
If you concluded with ישראל וראשי חדשים: within *k'dei dibbur*, say the correct version immediately. If *k'dei dibbur* has passed, go back to ראשי חדשים.

What did I do?

When did I remember?

Now I should...

Krias Hatorah • 2nd Day of Rosh Chodesh



Notes

13. If *Kaddish* was recited after *Revii*, do not say it again.
 14. If the Kohen did not start the blessings but only opened the *sefer Torah* to the Chanukah reading, a second *sefer Torah* is removed and the section for Rosh Chodesh is read as normal.

15. Even if you only said 'ברוך אתה ה'
 16. הרחמן הוא יזכנו ויגמולנו: הרחמן הוא יעשה לנו נסים כמו שעשה לאבותינו בימים ההם בזמן הזה. בימי מתתיהו...
 17. If you concluded ועל המזון you are *yotzeh*.

