

The Jewish Weekly

Saved From the Monastery

by Asharon Baltazar

When Rabbi Schneur Zalman was still a young student under the tutelage of the famed Maggid of Mezerich, he boarded at a house owned by a local widow. One day, the young scholar arrived home to find his landlady on the floor wailing hysterically. Her only son, she sobbed, had decided to convert to Christianity, and was being held in a locked room in a monastery.

"Don't worry," Rabbi Schneur Zalman comforted her, "with G-d's help, we will bring your son back."

Bringing this woman's plight to the Maggid would be difficult. The Maggid stayed locked in his room throughout most of the day which enabled him to quietly contemplate Torah. And outside his door stood his wary attendant, who was adept at keeping people away when the master wished to be alone.

"Listen to what I say," Rabbi Schneur Zalman said to the widow. "Tomorrow, Friday afternoon, while the attendant is away from the door for his pre-Shabbat bath, I will be able to open the door for you. Do not waste a second. Run inside and inform the Maggid of your dilemma."

The next day, Rabbi Schneur Zalman took advantage of the attendant's absence to open the door for the distraught widow. Inside, the Maggid, who was occupied with his spiritual preparations for the holy day of Shabbat, did not expect a strange woman to burst into his room, weeping uncontrollably. But the poor woman was so shattered that she stood silently at the door, unable to emit a single word. Apparently seeing no use for the interruption, the Maggid waved his hand, signaling her to leave. The woman emerged from the brief audience shattered and bitterly disappointed with herself.

But Rabbi Schneur Zalman was confident that the Maggid knew of the widow's misery down to the last detail. Righteous people, after all, are not bound by the conventional ways of learning information.

After the widow left, the Maggid did not make any mention of her or the purpose of her visit. But when the attendant returned from the bathhouse, the Maggid suddenly instructed all of his students to enter his room to welcome the Shabbat together. Despite the unusual nature of the request, the group heeded the Maggid's words.

Immediately after prayers, the attendant rushed to set the table for the evening meal. Generally lengthy and peppered with mystical Torah insights, the Shabbat meal was eaten in a hurry, again leaving the students wondering at their master's unusual behavior. Grace After Meals was recited promptly after the meal.

All this time, the Maggid maintained deep concentration and spoke with a booming and forceful tone, a marked departure from the unassuming voice the students usually heard.

Torah insights, the likes of which were never heard before, were expounded upon, his holy words interspersed with the occasional call to "listen, my brothers, to the Torah's sweetness."

Of all the students, only Rabbi Schneur Zalman knew the reason for the unusual change in routine. He sensed that from the moment the widow left the Maggid's office, the Maggid busied himself with reigniting her son's soul.

Then a mighty wind began to roar outside, steadily picking up speed. By this point, the Maggid's face was shining like a glowing torch. The students listened with growing trepidation to the wind that howled violently around them.

Boom!

Something thudded against one of the walls of the house and the students, concerned that the roof would collapse from the wind, bolted out of their seats. Unperturbed, the Maggid stopped his discourse and turned to his attendant: "Quickly take him to the nearby inn," he ordered.

The attendant hurried out the door and immediately stopped in his tracks. Lying on the ground outside the house was the widow's son, softly weeping. The attendant did not waste a second and proceeded to whisk the son away to the inn.

After the attendant left, the Maggid's serious demeanor, which had persisted throughout the entire evening, transitioned to joy, and he finished the discourse on a euphoric note. The Maggid then retired to his room, and Rabbi Schneur Zalman headed for the inn, curious to learn what led to the son's seemingly impossible release from the second floor of the monastery.

Rabbi Schneur Zalman found the young man sitting on the bed and reading the weekly Torah portion with large tears streaming down his face.

"How did you escape?" Rabbi Schneur Zalman asked gently.

The widow's son paused his tearful reading and began to tell his story.

"The beginning of my escape started two hours before nightfall. I was lying on my bed in a small cell on the monastery's second floor, determined to follow through with my choice. No amount of convincing would have made me change my mind. But then I had an overwhelming bout of longing for the G-d of my people, an urgent need to leave and reestablish my connection with the Jewish faith.

"I bolted from my bed and quickly strode to the cell door, intending to break it down. But the door remained steadfastly bolted from the outside. Discouraged, I collapsed back on my bed for about half an hour. But the pangs of yearning and love towards Judaism continued to intensify until I sensed my materialistic desires give away. This is how a dead person must feel, I thought; none of the things that had mattered so much to me seemed to have any consequence anymore.

"Lying there in bed, becoming more restless by the moment, I understood that this love could not have developed from myself. G-d was actively trying to protect my Jewish soul from self-destruction.

"Again, I unsuccessfully struggled to break down the door. There was no way out. I slumped on the bed, tears streaking my cheeks, and began to deliberate with myself. If G-d allowed me to experience this indescribable arousal of G-dly love, I had no doubt that He would surely come to my aid. I had to continue to try.

It Once Happened...

"I walked over to the cell's small window. I pushed it and, to my relief, it swung open. However, peering over the precarious ledge in the failing light, I was greeted by the sight of the hard flagstones far below. To jump from this height would leave all of my bones shattered, and even the prospect of a Jewish funeral was nonexistent. I was unsure what to do next.

"I rethought my decision several time, and made my way to the window, only to be discouraged again and again by the sheer drop.

"Darkness had already set in when I suddenly felt my legs dash across the room, leap onto the windowsill and carry me through the open window. I landed miraculously intact, aside from some minor pain in my feet. Despite this, my excitement was short lived. During my brief stay in the monastery, I had learned of the vicious dogs who guarded the premises. Chained away during the day, the dogs were set loose on the monastery grounds at night. Even if I managed to fend them off, their barking could easily alert the priests, who would surely take me back, and who knew what they would do to me then?

"G-d will help, I thought, and fearlessly strode towards the pack of dogs. They bounded towards me excitedly and circled around me eagerly, as though reuniting with one of their masters. Thankfully, they also kept silent, and I was able to slink cautiously across the monastery grounds. But then my heart fell. A towering stone wall separated me from my freedom. Topped with sharp spikes and the height of two men, the wall surrounded the monastery, its smooth surface providing no grip. It was impossible to scale.

"Raising my eyes once more, I pleadingly explained to G-d that I had tried everything that was humanly possible to escape, risking my life in the process. Now, standing beside the wall, I had nothing more to do.

"I was answered in the most incredible way. A strong gale immediately swept me off my feet and lifted me into the air. I was tossed over the unpassable wall and into the sky, tumbling over the countryside until I landed right beside the Maggid's house."

Displaying a zeal and aptitude that he had never known before, the young man applied himself to Torah study and the performance of good deeds for the rest of his days.

Years later, when Rabbi Schneur Zalman would have his own followers, he would recount this story on numerous occasions (noting that the young man's change of heart happened right around the time the Maggid began his devotions), testifying to the Maggid's greatness.

Reprinted from Chabad.org Magazine.

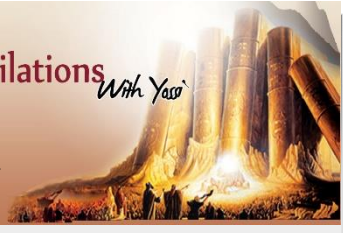
Editor's Note: The 19th of Kislev is the date on which the Maggid passed away in 1772, and Rabbi Shneur Zalman was miraculously liberated from Russian prison in 1798 after nearly being sentenced to death.



Y-GRAPHICS

Shabbat Times – Parshat Vayeishev

	Candle Lighting	Motzei Shabbat	Motzei Shabbat ר"ת
Jerusalem	4:00	5:15	5:53
Tel Aviv	4:14	5:16	
Haifa	4:04	5:14	
Be'er Sheva	4:19	5:18	



The Patient Menorah

By Rabbi Yitzchak Lipsch

One morning during Chanukah of 5733 (Dec, 1972), a group of teenaged boys including Shmuel Lipsch from the Chabad Junior Yeshiva in Tsfat set out to the Golan Heights to bring the light of Chanukah and other mitzvot to the residents of many of the small scattered communities there. After a long afternoon and evening of hard work and success, when they finally departed for home it was nearly ten o'clock at night.

As they approached the highway exit to the town of Hatzor - 15 minutes before Tsfat - they decided to detour to the large shopping center near the exit where they knew the stores would still be open, even at this late hour, to spread the light of Chanukah there too. As they went from one shop to another, they came upon a store where positioned on a shelf near the plate-glass window was a Chanukah menorah, set up with the proper number of candles for that night, but as yet unlit, as if it were waiting just for them.

The students entered together. Immediately the shopkeeper approached them and welcomed them with great joy. "I was praying you would come. I know that the Chanukah lights bring blessing to my business. I would never let the menorah go unlit, not even one night" she added enthusiastically.

The teenage boys were puzzled. "It's already quite late at night. Why did you wait for so long for someone to come? Why did you not just light the candles yourself?"

"Because," she smiled, "I am not Jewish.

"I am a Druse woman," she continued. "I live in the Druse village of Tuba az-Zanghariyya, a village less than a half-hour's drive from Tsfat, and even closer to Hatzor. It is located close to Kfar Nassi."

Not only were the boys surprised by her answer, they were more confused than before. "Why are the Chanukah lights of such significance to you if you are not Jewish?"

She related to them at length and with great sincerity why the lighting of the Chanukah menorah was so important for her. From the content of her words the yeshiva students grasped instantly that the lights were not just an "aid" for her business; it was clear that she was well aware that the fulfillment of a commandment brought an increased relationship to the Commander, to the Creator of All.

Indeed, the spiritual sensitivity revealed in her reply led the boys to suspect that perhaps she had a connection to Judaism beyond the mitzvah of Chanukah. They began to question her about her background.

It did not take more than a minute to verify their hunch, as in answer to their first question, about her family, she innocently revealed that her mother was Jewish! (In the Muslim world, religious status follows the father, so she never had a clue that she herself is Jewish according to Torah law.)

The young boys explained that through her mother she too possesses inside her the unique G-dly soul of a Jew, and therefore she is 100% Jewish. It must be, they added, that her strong commitment to having a lit menorah on the eight nights of Chanukah each year was caused by her divine Jewish neshama (soul) burning within her, seeking to express itself.

Her reaction was pure happiness. She asked to clarify whether her sisters and brothers are Jewish too. With great emotion she proclaimed that she would tell all her siblings that she is Jewish and that they are also. She thanked the boys profusely.

That night the menorah of the store was lit and the blessings were said by a proud Jewess, newly ready to take her part among the Jewish people.

Reprinted from an email of KabbalaOnline.com.



When Yosef was rotting away in prison, the wife of Potiphar came to him and said, "If you will do what I'm asking you, just one time, I will get you out of prison. Otherwise, you will rot here forever."

What did Yosef tell her? "Do you know who I am? I am one of the twelve tribes, and we are so holy. If G-d wants to get me out of prison, He has to do it in a better way than this." Then Yosef looked up to heaven and prayed, "Ribono Shel Olam, thank You so much for this little ray of hope, but Master of the World, if you want me to be free, isn't there a better way?"

Yosef could have become free like this, but that was not the point, that was not what Yosef wanted.

I heard from the Chief Rabbi of England and the Commonwealth, Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis, that Reb Tzadok HaKohen connects the story of Yosef to Chanukah by saying.

They didn't have to find the "pure oil." They didn't have to wait for new "pure oil" either. The halachah is that "tum'ah hutra b'tzibbur" — in the Beit HaMikdash, you can burn impure oil also. But in essence - this is not what we really want. It is not what Yosef wanted.

Essentially - this is not what Hashem wants.

I can find ways to make everything work, but this is not the way Hashem wants it to be. It's got to be so much deeper. It has to be holy. What does holy mean? When it comes to doing something permissible, you can get away with so much. When it comes to something holy, it's got to be so much deeper, than just finding a way to make it work.

This is what the light of Chanukah is all about, this is what the light of the tzaddik is all about.

So I want to bless you that the lights of the Chanukah Menorah should be pure, and let's pray with all our hearts, for the recovery of all the sick from this crazy pandemic, as well as praying for our soldiers and healthcare professionals, and Chevra Kadisha members worldwide, and for those who need healing, shidduchim, children and parnassah and may we be blessed to have the most awesome, gorgeous, beautiful, peaceful, healthy, amazing, relaxed, spiritual Shabbat, happy Chanukah and Chodesh Tov.

Yossi

The Jewish Weekly's PARSHA FACTS

NO MITZVOT IN THIS PARSHA

NUMBER OF PESUKIM: 112

NUMBER OF WORDS: 1558

NUMBER OF LETTERS: 5972

HAFTORA:

Amos 2:6-3:8

Shabbat Mevarchim Chodesh Tevet

Rosh Chodesh - Shabbat & Sunday, Dec. 4 & 5, 2021.

Chanukah starts after sundown, Sunday, November 28 (after nightfall), and lasts for eight days thru Monday, December 6.

The Jewish Weekly and Family Fraenkel wish you A Happy Chanukah!

☞ EREV CHANUKAH

On *Erev Chanukah*, we say *Tachanun* during *Shacharit* but not at *Mincha*.

Some have the custom to take out and prepare their *Menorah* three days before *Chanukah* and they keep it out till the third day after *Chanukah*.

☞ MENORAH LIGHTING: WHO?

All men light the *Menorah*. Boys are also trained to do so from a young age.

Women are obligated to light the *Menorah*. Practically, a married woman fulfils her obligation through her husband's lighting, and a girl fulfils her obligation through her father's lighting. Therefore, they should be present when the *Menorah* is lit, and they should have in mind to fulfil their obligation. Even very young girls should be present when the *Menorah* is lit. For this reason, the *Menorah* lighting should be scheduled at a time when everyone can be present. [Nevertheless, they have still fulfilled their obligation even if not present.]

In the following circumstances, a woman should recite the *Brachot* and light the *Menorah* herself:

- An unmarried woman who does not permanently live with her father. [This includes seminary girls.]
- A woman who is temporarily away from her family home and husband/father, and she is not guesting with someone who is lighting the *Menorah*, e.g. she is in a hotel, hospital, or empty home.
- A woman who remains at home, but her husband/father is away for the night.

A woman who is temporarily away from her family home and husband/father, but she is guesting with a host who is lighting the *Menorah*, she automatically fulfils her obligation through her father's/husband's lighting at the family home, unless:

- It is daytime in her time-zone when her husband/father lights *Menorah*.
- Her husband/father is away from the family home and lighting elsewhere.

In these two cases, the woman should participate in her host's lighting by sharing in the expenses of the oil and wicks, and she should also be present when the *Menorah* is kindled.

☞ MENORAH LIGHTING: VENUE

One must light at home (where he usually eats and sleeps) and nowhere else. Even if eating out, one must still light the *Menorah* at home.

If one is away from home the entire night, he should light at the place where he is lodging. If he is still there the following night, he may light there as well, even if he intends to relocate later during the night.

One should avoid crossing the International Dateline during *Chanukah*. Similarly, one should avoid travel plans that prevent him from lodging overnight in a dwelling. One who finds himself in such a situation should consult a *Rav*.

☞ MENORAH LIGHTING: WHERE?

Some hold the *Menorah* is lit inside, some hold it should be lit in a doorway, some hold by the window and others hold outside.

For those who hold the *Menorah* is situated at a doorway, on the side opposite the *Mezuzah*. If there is no *Mezuzah*, such as in a hotel, the *Menorah* is placed at the right side of the door. [If the *Menorah* was placed on the wrong side, one has still fulfilled his obligation.]

The *Menorah* should be placed within the actual doorway, as close to the doorpost as possible. [If this is not feasible, it should at least be placed within a *Tefach* (8cm) of the doorway.] It does not matter if the flames span north-south or east-west.

It is preferable to use the doorway of the room where one eats, as opposed to the doorway of the room where one sleeps.

Although it is preferable for the head of the household to light at the main eating area, nevertheless, each child should light at the entrance to his personal bedroom, unless there are safety concerns.

When more than one person lights at the same venue, each set of flames should be noticeably distinct from the others. In practice, this is easily accomplished when everyone uses a separate *Menorah*. However, when two people improvise by sharing the same *Menorah* (e.g. during the first nights of *Chanukah*), or by not using a *Menorah* at all, there should be a clear gap between each set of flames.

Those who have the custom to light in the window should make sure it is safe to do so.

The *Menorah* should be lit facing the street rather than the back of the house.

It should be lit on the right side of the window.

Some have the custom to light outside on the edge of their property closer to public property.

If one regularly lights outside, yet someone gave them a new silver *Menorah*, in fear of it being stolen one should rather light their old *Menorah* outside.

Those in a *Yeshivah* dormitory, seminary or at an overnight camp should follow the instructions of their *Hanhalah*.

The *Menorah* is situated so that the flames are anywhere between 3 *Tefachim* (24cm) and 10 *Tefachim* (80cm) from the floor. If the *Menorah* is placed lower or higher, it is still

acceptable (unless the flames are higher than twenty *Amot* – 9.6 meters). A large *Menorah* which is taller than 10 *Tefachim* may be used even in the first instance.

The *Menorah* must not be situated in a place where there is a strong possibility that it will be extinguished, e.g. by winds or vandals.

☞ PREPARING THE MENORAH

Ideally, a nice *Menorah* should be used.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe discouraged the use of *Menorahs* with round branches as per Rashi's interpretation. Instead, Chabad use either a *Menorah* with diagonal (or square-shaped) branches, or one with no branches at all.

The *Menorah* must be designed so that all the flames are in a straight line and at the same height. The flames should not be too close together, as they need to appear noticeably distinct. [Furthermore, wax candles need to be sufficiently spaced so that the heat of the flames do not melt the wax of the adjacent candles.] One should be especially attentive to this when improvising without a *Menorah*.

Each day of *Chanukah*, the *Menorah* is prepared in advance, so that it is ready at the appropriate time.

On the first night, one prepares a lamp at the extreme right. On the second night and thereafter, one adds a lamp to the immediate left of the others, preparing the lamps from right to left.

The *Shamash* is situated higher or separate than the other flames.

One *Shamash* is sufficient for multiple *Menorahs* when they are right next to each other, but not when they are situated in different parts of the room.

☞ THE WICKS

Wicks are preferably made of cotton or linen. [If these are unavailable, the wicks may be made of any material.]

Some have the practice to replace the wicks every day and some have the custom not to do so, being that used wicks are easier to kindle. [According to the latter custom, the newly added lamp is prepared with the wick that was lit first on the previous night.]

☞ THE FUEL

Ideally, olive oil is used to fuel the flames, and a beeswax candle for the *Shamash*. [If these are not available, one should use a type of oil or wax candle that burns a clear flame. If this is not possible, any type of oil or wax candle may be used.]

The *Menorah* may be prepared with oil remaining from the previous night.

Before kindling, one ensures that the *Menorah* has sufficient fuel to last the required duration

– at least 50 minutes in total, and at least 30 minutes after *Tzeit Hakochavim* (whichever is longer).

Some candles manufactured for *Chanukah* typically burn for only half-hour. If these are lit before *Tzeit Hakochavim*, one would not be able to recite the *Brachot*. Furthermore, even if lighting after *Tzeit Hakochavim*, such candles tend to burn for less than half-hour in a warm environment. Therefore, longer lasting candles should be used. [When necessary, there is room to be lenient for a child under *Bar Mitzvah* who is unaware that the candles are burning less than they should.]

If one realized after lighting that there is insufficient oil, he should not merely add more oil. Instead, he must extinguish the flames, add more oil, and then relight the flames without the *Brachot*.

🕯️ MENORAH LIGHTING: WHEN?

Many light the *Menorah* after *Maariv* and some light immediately after sunset, between *Mincha* and *Maariv*.

If that is not possible, one should light as soon as possible after that time. [Technically, one may light all night, until dawn. However, if very late, one should arrange for another person to be awake and present for the *Menorah* lighting.]

Davening with a *Minyan* takes precedence to lighting *Menorah* at the ideal time.

When lighting after *Tzeit Hakochavim*, one *davens Maariv* first, unless there is no *Minyan* scheduled until later, or unless he **regularly** *davens* with a *Minyan* that is scheduled later.

If one cannot light the *Menorah* at night, he may also light any time after *Plag Hamincha*. [In this case, one will need to use additional oil, enough to last until half-hour after *Tzeit Hakochavim*.]

One may not light before *Plag Hamincha*. If he did so, he must relight at the correct time, and recite the *Brachot* again.

🕯️ BEFORE LIGHTING

Once the sun sets, one may not perform any activity that might distract him from lighting the *Menorah*. Therefore, one may not eat more than 57 grams of bread, drink alcoholic beverages, perform work, or even study *Torah*.

Similarly, one should not begin these activities within the half-hour period prior to sunset, unless he appoints a *Shomer* (guardian) to remind him to light the *Menorah* at sunset. Nevertheless, one may learn during this time.

If, for whatever reason, one began these activities within the half-hour period prior to sunset, he may continue until sunset. At that time, he must immediately stop whatever he is doing.

One may begin these activities **before** the half-hour period prior to sunset and continue until sunset. [Technically, he may continue even after sunset and light the *Menorah* afterwards. Nevertheless, it is commendable to stop as soon as the sun sets in order to light the *Menorah*.]

One may not take a nap within the half-hour period before sunset, or afterwards, until he lights the *Menorah*.

All the above applies to all men and women, even if he or she will discharge their obligation through watching or participating in someone else's lighting of the *Menorah*. [Nevertheless, there is room to be lenient for those who are not actually lighting the *Menorah* themselves.]

🕯️ MENORAH LIGHTING: HOW?

Before making the *Brachot*, one lights the *Shamash*. While making the *Brachot* and lighting the flames, the *Shamash* is held in the right hand.

On the first night, three *Brachot* are said. On the following nights, only two *Brachot* are recited, as *Shehecheyanu* is omitted.

One must recite the *Brachot* and kindle the flames whilst standing unsupported, without leaning on anything. If this is not possible, or after the fact, the *Mitzvah* is fulfilled even if sitting.

After one **completely** finishes reciting all of the *Brachot*, the flames are lit without delay, from left to right.

One may not speak between the *Brachot* and the conclusion of lighting the *Menorah*. [If one did speak, he does not repeat the *Brachot*, unless he said something totally unrelated to the lighting of the *Menorah*, and he did so before kindling even one flame.]

Although the *Menorah* is not supposed to be moved once lit, one may move it a *Tefach* or two if this is necessary to facilitate its lighting, and then return it to its original position. (This may be practically relevant for someone who is infirm and cannot reach the *Menorah*.)

Haneirot Halalu is said or sung after all the flames are completely lit and the *Shamash* is set down, followed by *Maoz Tzur* in many communities.

🕯️ AFTER LIGHTING

The flames should burn for at least 50 minutes in total, and for at least 30 minutes after *Tzeit Hakochavim* (whichever is longer).

If a flame extinguished during this time, it is appropriate to relight it (without reciting the *Brachot*).

During this time, the *Chanukah* flames may not be used for any purpose. This includes using a flame to light another *Chanukah* flame or the *Shamash*.

Similarly, benefit may not be derived from any of the light generated by the flames. This is one of the reasons why the *Shamash* flame is placed higher than the other flames, in order that any inadvertent benefit may be attributed to the *Shamash*. Nevertheless, one should not rely on the *Shamash*, and instead ensure that the room is well-lit.

The *Menorah* should not be moved during this time.

It is customary for women and men to refrain from any labor (i.e. sewing, knitting, laundering or ironing) during this time. It is also preferable to avoid leaving the house to

go shopping, or the like. However, cooking and cleaning is permitted.

One should sit by the *Menorah* for at least half-hour, and utilize the time for learning, or for *Chanukah* inspiration.

After the flames have burned for the required amount of time, the *Menorah* may be moved, even if the flames are still burning. Similarly, at this time, women may perform labor outside the view of the burning flames.

Even after the required amount of time has passed, it is still inappropriate to derive benefit from the flames or to extinguish them (unless leaving them unattended would create a safety hazard).

During *Chanukah*, the *Menorah* should not be used for any other purpose. Similarly, after the *Menorah* flames are extinguished, the leftover wicks and fuel should not be discarded or used for other purposes. Instead, it should be kept until the last day of *Chanukah*.

🕯️ SHUL MENORAH

The *Shul Menorah* is situated at the southern side of the *Shul*, with the flames spanning east-west.

The *Shul Menorah* should be easily visible to the entire *Shul*. It is therefore placed higher than 10 *Tefachim* (80cm).

Except for *Motzei Shabbat*, the *Shul Menorah* is lit after *Mincha* and before *Maariv*. Some schedule *Mincha* so that the *Menorah* will be lit after *Plag Hamincha*, but before sunset.

The *Shul Menorah* is prepared before *Mincha* so as not to disturb anyone's concentration during *Mincha*. Just as with a personal *Menorah*, it must be prepared with enough fuel to burn until at least half-hour after *Tzeit Hakochavim*.

At the end of *Mincha*, immediately before *Aleinu*, one of the congregants recites the *Brachot* and lights the *Menorah*. Afterwards, all present say or sing *Haneirot Halalu* (and *Maoz Tzur*), followed by *Aleinu*.

On the first night of *Chanukah*, the *Shul Menorah* should not be lit by an *Avel* (within 12 months of a parent's passing or within 30 days of a spouse, child or sibling's passing).

One does not fulfil his obligation with the *Menorah* that is lit in *Shul*. Even the one who kindles the *Menorah* in *Shul* must relight at home, with the *Brachot*. [On the first night, he does not repeat *Shehecheyanu*, unless he is also lighting on behalf of others who have not yet fulfilled their obligation.]

Throughout the 24 hours of each day of *Chanukah*, the flames of the *Shul Menorah* (including the *Shamash*) remain lit whenever people are present in the *Shul*, provided that there are no safety concerns. At the very least, the flames should remain lit during the times of *davening*. [If the flames need to be relit during the course of the 24 hours, they are lit with a *Shamash*, but without reciting the *Brachot*.]

🕯️ PIRSUMEI NISSA

A major emphasis of *Chanukah* is *Pirsumei Nissa*. Most years this would include *Menorah*

lightings in the most public places possible, and events which promote the spirit of *Chanukah*, however, due to the pandemic, it is more important to adhere to the Ministry of Health relevant for one's country or city.

If permissible by the authorities, one should try to participate in these activities and help ensure their success, even if this requires postponing one's personal *Menorah* lighting to a later hour.

The flames of the public *Menorah* must be no taller than twenty *Amot* (9.6 metres) from the ground.

The public *Menorah* should not be situated in a place where there is a strong possibility that it will be extinguished, e.g. by winds or vandals.

Since it is ideal for the *Brachot* to be recited when kindling a public *Menorah*, the lighting should be scheduled after *Plag Hamincha*, and the *Menorah* should have enough fuel to burn at least half-hour after *Tzeit Hakochavim*, just as with a personal *Menorah*. [Otherwise, the public *Menorah* should still be lit, but without the *Brachot*.]

The *Brachot* are recited when burning a liquid or solid fuel – as opposed to gas, butane, propane or electricity.

The *Brachot* are recited only by the one who is lighting the *Menorah*. [On the first night, he recites *Shehecheyanu* – even if he already recited it beforehand when lighting the *Shul Menorah* or at home.] The audience should be forewarned not to recite the *Brachot* along with him, but rather, just to answer *Amen*.

The flames should be lit without moving the lamps out of place.

Just as in *Shul*, one does not fulfil his obligation by attending (or lighting) a public *Menorah*. The participants should be made aware of this. [Even the one who kindles the public *Menorah* must relight at home, with the *Brachot*. On the first night, he does not repeat *Shehecheyanu*, unless he is also lighting on behalf of others who have not yet fulfilled their obligation.]

One should try to reach out to those in hospitals, old-age homes and prisons.

When the person lighting the *Menorah* does not know the *Brachot*, one may prompt him word by word, or recite the *Brachot* on his or her behalf. [In the latter instance, if one will still need to fulfil the *Mitzvah* himself at a later time, he should have in mind to be *Motzeh* the listeners but not himself.]

Shehecheyanu is said the first time one fulfils the *Mitzvah*, even if it is after the first day of *Chanukah*.

When visiting a hospital or old age home, one should be mindful as to whether it is a place where the *Brachot* may be recited. If not, the *Menorah* should be lit without reciting the *Brachot*.

Gatherings should be arranged for adults and children, especially for those not yet familiar with *Chanukah*. The opportunity should be utilized to rejoice with them; to teach them about *Chanukah*; to share words of *Torah*; to

light the *Menorah* and give *Tzedakah* with them; and to give them *Chanukah Gelt*.

Where possible, these gatherings should be scheduled to allow the *Menorah* to be lit after *Plag Hamincha*, so that the *Brachot* will be recited. If this is not practical, the *Menorah* should still be lit, but without the *Brachot*.

When distributing doughnuts, latkes or other food, one should ensure that the appropriate *Brachot* are made for each food item.

🕯️ TACHNUN & V'AL HANISSIM

Tachnun is not recited from *Mincha* of *Erev Chanukah* until after *Chanukah*.

V'al Hanissim is recited in each *Amidah* of *Chanukah*. [One should not intentionally skip *V'al Hanissim* to recite *Kedushah* or *Modim* with the *Minyan*.]

If one forgot *V'al Hanissim* at the appropriate place in the *Amidah*, he may recite it before saying *Hashem's* name at the end of that *Brachah*. After that point, he does not recite it.

V'al Hanissim is recited each time one *bentches* during *Chanukah*. If one forgot *V'al Hanissim* at the appropriate place in *bentching*, he may recite it before saying *Hashem's* name at the end of that *Brachah*. After that point, he may recite it as a *Harachaman*, as per the *Nusach* printed in some *siddurim*.

🕯️ HALLEL

Full *Hallel* is recited each day of *Chanukah*, right after *The Amidah of Shacharit*. If the *Chazzan* is a mourner (for a deceased parent) during the first eleven months, someone else takes over for *Hallel*, but not for the *Kaddish* which follows.

One must recite *Hallel* whilst standing unsupported. If this is not possible, or after the fact, the *Mitzvah* is fulfilled even if sitting.

One may not interrupt full *Hallel* other than for those things that one may respond to during the *Brachot of Kriat Shema*. [E.g. If the *Chazzan* recites *Kaddish*, one answers *Amen Yehei Shmei* etc, and *Amen to d'amiran b'alma*. One also answers *Barchu* and *Amen* when the *Brachot* are recited before and after an *Aliyah*, and may also recite the *Brachot* if he is called up for an *Aliyah*.]

It is preferable to recite *Hallel* with the *Minyan*. If one is not up to the *Minyan*, this creates a dilemma; on the one hand it is appropriate to recite *Hallel* with the congregation, and on the other hand, it is appropriate that one should *daven* in the correct order. One should therefore make a point of being up to the *Minyan* when *Hallel* is said.

If one forgot to recite *Hallel*, he should recite it with a *Brachah* as soon as he remembers, unless the sun already set.

If one mistakenly recited half-*Hallel*, he must repeat the entire *Hallel* (without a *Brachah*).

After *Hallel*, the *Chazzan* recites only half *Kaddish*. [If he mistakenly said *Kaddish Titkabel*, he should recite half *Kaddish* after *U'va L'tziyon*.]

🕯️ CHANUKAH CUSTOMS

The days of *Chanukah* should be utilized to give extra *Tzedakah* and to learn additional *Torah*. Children should also be encouraged in this regard.

One may not fast on *Chanukah* – not even a *Chattan* or *Kallah* on the day of their *Chuppah*, or for a *Yahrzeit*.

It is customary to eat foods fried in oil, such as *Latkes* and doughnuts, to commemorate the miracle of the oil.

It is also customary to eat dairy foods, to commemorate the miracle of *Yehudit*.

It is customary to eat special meals to celebrate the miracles of *Chanukah* and the reinauguration of the *Beit Hamikdash*. These meals are regarded as a *Seudat Mitzvah* if they are accompanied by song and praise for the miracles *Hashem* wrought, or when their purpose is to publicize the miracle of *Chanukah* and enhance the observance of its *Mitzvot*.

On one of the nights of *Chanukah*, the *Rebbeim* of *Chabad* would conduct a *gathering* of sorts for their family members (both men and women), which was referred to as "Latkes evening". The stories related at these gatherings included several that were repeated every single *Chanukah*.

The days of *Chanukah* should be utilized to arrange and/or participate in family, school, workplace and communal *Chanukah* gatherings. The purpose of these gatherings is to tell the story and spread the message of *Chanukah*, along with the lessons derived from it.

One gives *Chanukah Gelt* to his or her spouse and children (whether minors or adults) each day of *Chanukah*, with a special addition (double or triple) on the fourth or fifth night of *Chanukah*. [For *Shabbat*, one gives *Chanukah Gelt* either the day before or after. One who is stringent about handling money on *Motzei Shabbat* should refrain from giving *Chanukah Gelt* until Sunday.]

One gives *Chanukah Gelt* to his students.

It is appropriate for children to give *Chanukah Gelt* to each other.

There is no source for giving *Chanukah* gifts other than *Gelt*. [If one nevertheless does so, he should bear in mind that gifts may not be given on *Shabbat* unless they are used on *Shabbat* itself.]

It is customary to play *Dreidel (sevivon)*. One should not play for money (unless the initial understanding is that all "wins" will be returned).

It goes without saying that gambling or playing-cards is not in the spirit of *Chanukah*, and is in fact a desecration. The *Kedushat Levi* writes that each playing-card contains tremendous impurity of the unmentionable type.

🕯️ EREV SHABBAT CHANUKAH

When possible, public *Menorah* lightings should still be conducted after *Plag Hamincha*, despite the busy hour.

The *Minyan* for *Mincha* is scheduled earlier than usual, to allow for the *Menorah* at home to be lit after *Mincha*. Nevertheless, *Mincha* should be late enough for the *Shul Menorah* to be lit after *Plag Hamincha*.

One should endeavor to *daven Mincha* with a *Minyan* before lighting *Menorah*. [If this is not possible, it is preferable to *daven* with a *Minyan* after lighting the *Menorah* than to *daven* without a *Minyan* before lighting the *Menorah*.]

The *Menorah* at home is lit just before the *Shabbat* candles are lit. The lighting of the *Menorah* should be scheduled so that it does not interfere with the lighting time for the *Shabbat* candles.

Being that the *Menorah* is lit on *Erev Shabbat* earlier than usual, one should ensure that there is enough fuel for the flames to burn for half-hour after *Tzeit Hakochavim*. Similarly, a longer-lasting *Shamash* should be used.

On *Erev Shabbat*, one need not sit next to the flames for half-hour.

The *Menorah* should be situated so that its flames are not fanned or extinguished by the opening or closing of any doors or windows, or by people passing by.

Everything beneath a lit *Menorah* becomes a "*Bassis L'Issur*" on *Shabbat*, and may not be moved. If the place where the *Menorah* is situated needs to be used, one can prevent the chair or table from becoming a *Bassis L'Issur* by placing a *Challah* or bottle of wine on it from sunset until *Tzeit Hakochavim*.

Similarly, one may place the *Menorah* on a tray which is not designated exclusively for use with a candelabra or candlesticks, and place a *Challah* or bottle of wine on the tray from sunset until *Tzeit Hakochavim*.

In both of these situations, the chair or tray – along with all of its contents – may be moved on *Shabbat*, but only **once** the location is **actually** needed. The chair or tray may **not** be moved simply for the sake of protecting the *Menorah*.

The chair or tray should be moved carefully, as the *Menorah* itself cannot be directly handled. Were the *Menorah* to fall whilst being moved, one would not be able to catch it or support it directly with his hands. Furthermore, if the flames are still burning, and they are fueled by oil, one must be careful that the liquid doesn't rise or fall and cause the flame to become bigger or smaller.

Another option: The *Menorah* (as well as the *Bassis* beneath it) may be moved by a non-Jew – but only if one had in mind (and preferably verbalized) at the onset of *Shabbat* that a non-Jew would move it after the flames extinguished.

SHABBAT CHANUKAH

Shabbat Chanukah this year is also the first day of Rosh Chodesh. Throughout davening, one should remember to recite Ya'aleh Veyavo.

If one forgot Ya'aleh Veyavo in davening, or is unsure whether he recited it:

- At Maariv, one does not correct his omission.

- At Shacharit and Mincha, if he realized before saying Hashem's name at the end of Hamachazir Shechinato L'tziyon, he goes back. If he remembered between the conclusion of that Brachah and Modim, he recites it at that point, without going back. If he remembers any time after that point, but before he began reciting (the second) Yih'yu L'ratzon, he returns to the beginning of Retzei. If he remembered only afterwards, he must repeat the entire Amidah.

- If one forgot Ya'aleh Veyavo during Shacharit and only realized after Musaf, he does not repeat Shacharit.

- If one forgot Ya'aleh Veyavo during Mincha, and only realized after the Zman Tefillah has passed, he must recite an additional Amidah during Maariv, as compensation. Atah Chonantanu is recited only the first time. If one mistakenly said it only the second time, he must repeat the Amidah a third time without it. However, if one mistakenly said Atah Chonantanu both times, or not at all, he does need to recite the Amidah a third time.

- When repeating the Amidah, one should wait the span of time to walk four Amot (approx. two meters), and preferably, one should recite words of supplication between them.

During Birchot Hamazon, one should remember to recite V'al Hanissim, Retzei and Ya'aleh Veyavo. One should recite both the Harachaman for Shabbat as well as for Rosh Chodesh.

If one forgot Retzei or Ya'aleh Veyavo in Birchot Hamazon:

- If he remembered before saying Hashem's name at Bonei Yerushalayim, he goes back.

- If he remembered after that, but before beginning the next Brachah, he recites the extra Brachah as printed in some Bentchers.

- If one already began even the first word (Baruch) of the next Brachah, one must bentsh again for omitting Retzei, but not for omitting Ya'aleh Veyavo.

- When one forgot Retzei and bentshes again, he need not repeat V'al Hanissim if he already recited it the first time, but he should still repeat Ya'aleh Veyavo.

Three Sifrei Torah are taken out for Kriat Hatorah. The Chanukah Haftorah is read, some add the first and last Passuk of the Rosh Chodesh Haftorah, followed by the first and last Passuk of the Machar Chodesh Haftorah.

Av Harachamim and Tzidkatecha are not recited.

For Musaf, one davens Atah Yatzarta. [If one neglected to do so, but remembered before he began reciting (the second) Yih'yu L'ratzon at

the end of the Amidah, he returns to Atah Yatzarta. If he remembered only afterwards, he must repeat the entire Amidah.]

It is customary to eat something special in honor of Rosh Chodesh, distinct from the special foods that one eats in honor of Shabbat and Chanukah.

MOTZEI SHABBAT AND SUNDAY

Maariv should be davened promptly.

Motzei Shabbat and Sunday is the second day of Rosh Chodesh. Throughout davening, one should recite Ya'aleh Veyavo. During Birchot Hamazon, one should recite Ya'aleh Veyavo, as well as the Harachaman for Rosh Chodesh. [See previous section for one who forgot, or is unsure, whether he recited Ya'aleh Veyavo in davening or bentshing. If one forgot Ya'aleh Veyavo during Mincha on the second day of Rosh Chodesh, and only realized after the Zman Tefillah has passed, he recites the Amidah twice during Maariv, but does not recite Ya'aleh Veyavo in either.]

The Shul Menorah is lit, Haneirot Halalu and Maoz Tzur are sung right before Aleinu. [See section entitled "Shul Menorah" for more details.] As usual, Havdallah in Shul is not recited until Maariv is completely finished. In communities where they say V'Yiten Lechah in Shul before Aleinu, they should light before V'Yiten Lechah.

One should go home quickly, in order to light the Menorah as soon as possible.

At home, most make Havdallah first, followed by Menorah lighting, *Haneirot Halalu*, *Maoz Tzur* and *V'Yiten Lechah*, some make Havdallah after Menorah lighting, and some make Havdallah and say *V'Yiten Lechah* prior to Menorah lighting

Although one normally recites half-Hallel on Rosh Chodesh, full Hallel is recited when it falls on Chanukah.

Two Sifrei Torah are taken out for Kriat Hatorah, with the first three Aliyot for Rosh Chodesh, and the fourth for Chanukah.

It is customary to eat something special in honor of Rosh Chodesh, distinct from the foods eaten in honor of Chanukah.

ZOT CHANUKAH (SUNDAY NIGHT / MONDAY)

The last night and day of Chanukah is known as *Zot Chanukah*.

The wicks and oils remaining from the *Menorah* are gathered together and burned on the last day of Chanukah. [This does not apply to the wicks or oil that were not used at all, such as any oil remaining in the flask.] No benefit should be derived from this fire.

APPROXIMATE ZMANIM FOR JERUSALEM

Night	Plag Hamincha	Shkiah (Sunset)	Tzeit Kochavim
1 st (Sun)	3:30pm	4:40pm	5:14pm
2 nd (Mon)	3:30pm	4:40pm	5:14pm
3 rd (Tue)	3:30pm	4:40pm	5:14pm
4 th (Wed)	3:30pm	4:40pm	5:14pm
5 th (Thu)	3:30pm	4:39pm	5:14pm
6 th (Fri)	3:30pm	4:39pm	5:14pm
7 th (שבת)	Shabbat Ends: 5:15pm		
8 th (Sun)	3:31pm	4:39pm	5:14pm

