



Who Lights

Both men and women are obligated in this mitzvah. There is a mitzvah of *chinuch* to train a minor son in this mitzvah. While only the head of household is obligated, the Ashkenazic *minhag* is to (be zealous and) have all male household members light independently. A woman fulfills her obligation via her husband or with the in-home lighting of an adult male household member, even if she is away from home. Ideally, a husband should wait for his wife to return home before lighting, even if he will miss the preferred *z'man*. If a husband is away for the night, he may technically fulfill his obligation with his wife's lighting back at home (if he is in a similar time zone). However it is best that he light in his location on his own and have in mind not to be *yotze* through his household. The wife, in turn, should light at home, having in mind as well not to be *yotze* with her husband's lighting.

What to Light

It is preferable to use olive oil. Other than the *shammash*, one should use either oil or candles but not a mix of both. There should be enough oil in the cup at the time of lighting for the Menorah to burn for at least a half hour after nightfall (*tzeis hakochavim*). If, inadvertently, any of the candles go out before *tzeis*, it is not necessary to relight them, so long as the original lighting was done from *shekiah* and onward. [However, it is praiseworthy to relight them without a berachah.] Unlike *Neiros Shabbos*, most Poskim say one cannot use an electric Menorah, even under extenuating circumstances.

Where to Light

Common practice in the USA is to light indoors by a window which faces the street and is not higher than 20 *amos* (approximately 35.5 ft) from street level. Others light by the front door or other doorway within the home opposite the Mezuzah. However, the primary *Pirumei Nisa* (publicizing of the miracle) is to the members of the household. Thus, lighting by a window that is in a very "out-of-the-way" place in the home is not recommended. If the menorah is not being lit by a window, it should preferably be placed by a doorway within the home opposite the Mezuzah. Once

lit, a menorah may not be moved more than a minimal amount.

A menorah is lit in shul each evening before Maariv (with all berachos recited) and before Shacharis (without berachos). In many shuls the menorah is positioned in the southern part of the shul, with the candles positioned beginning from the east, and kindled from west to east.

The menorah must be lit at one's place of residence, even if only his temporary residence. A newly arrived guest who will be staying overnight can light upon arrival even though they only recently took up residence. One who will depart from home after the *z'man hadlakah* may still light at home and then depart (even immediately). A guest who has established a temporary residence may light at his host's home prior to departing (but should remain there for half an hour). Alternatively, one can wait and light at home if they will arrive at the proper *z'man*. One who is being hosted and is sleeping and eating in different places should light at whichever of the two is considered primary.

When to Light

The *minhagim* differ as to the optimal time to light the Menorah, and whether Maariv should be davened prior to lighting. Opinions vary from *shekiah* until *tzeis hakochavim* and one should follow their *minhag*. In cases of extreme necessity, there may be room to allow lighting as early as *p'lag haminchah* (approximately an hour before *shekiah*). Ideally, a husband should wait for his wife to return home before lighting, even if he will miss the preferred *z'man*.

One should preferably not take a nap, engage in an absorbing task, or begin a meal (including eating a large amount of *pas habaah b'kisin*) in the half hour before the *z'man*, lest he forget about the upcoming mitzvah. Once the *z'man* arrives, one must stop all activity and perform the mitzvah. One who is unable to perform the *hadlakah* until a later time should appoint a *shomer* or set an alarm to remind him, which then removes the above restrictions. If one is lighting late, it is best to have someone on hand to witness his lighting.

How to Light

Common practice is to light the candle in the rightmost position on the first night. From the second night and

on, the candles are added from right to left; lighting begins with the newest candle and moves to the right. The *neiros mitzvah* should not be used to light one another; rather the *shamash* or another flame source should be used to light all the *neiros*. One should have a lit candle in his right hand prior to reciting the *berachos*, and should position his hand so that the lit *shamash* is positioned closest to the night's new *ner* (so that he does not 'pass over' any other *neiros* when lighting the newest *ner*). (Those who light adjacent to a doorway may light the rightmost candle first as it is closest to the doorpost.) The *berachos* of *L'hadlik Ner Shel Chanukah* and *She'asa Nissim* are recited, as well as *Shehecheyanu* on the first night. Following the *Hadlakah*, *Haneiros Hallalu* and *Ma'oz Tzur* are recited or sung. One should be sure that one wick is reliably aflame before reciting *Haneiros Halalu* (so as not to create a *hefsek* between the berachos and the lighting). One may not derive benefit from the menorah lights; for this reason the additional *shamash* is left lit adjacent to the Menorah lights.

This week's edition is dedicated as
a *zechus l'refuah sheleima*
Mrs. Rochel Zlotowitz amus"l
חווה פייגא רחל בת חיה לרפ"ש
(Ira's Mother)

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