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DAY-TO-DAY HALACHIC GUIDE

Detailed instructions on the
laws and customs for
Chanukah 5781

Also:
19-20 Kislev
5 Teves
10 Teves

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Distilled from a series
of public shiurim delivered by
Horav Yosef Yeshaya Braun, shlita
member of the Badatz of Crown Heights

4 | DAY-TO-DAY HALACHIC GUIDE CHANUKAH 5781

In a sichah on the second day of Rosh Hashanah in the year 5752, the Rebbe stated:

“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 Kollal 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.

* * *

The basic laws and customs presented below are derived from multiple sources. Due to a dearth of space and time they are presented without their references and halachic notes. Primary sources include: *Shulchan Aruch* and commentaries, *Sefer HaMinhagim Chabad*, *Luach Colel Chabad*, *Sichos* and *Igros Kodesh*.

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.

* * *

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

“Hashem **begs** the Jewish people,” the Rebbe passionately states,¹ “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.’”

“We must experience greater longing and yearning for the Redemption,” the Rebbe demanded.² “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—man and woman alike—must know in order to put them into practical use on a daily basis, such as many of the laws of the offerings.”

Our heartfelt wishes of **Mazal Tov** to the Rav, member of the Crown Heights Badatz, **Rabbi Y.Y. Braun** and his wife, Yehudis, on the engagement of his daughter Chaya Mushka to Sholom Dovber Liberow. May they merit to build an joyful, everlasting edifice within the Jewish nation with plentiful brachos, materially and spiritually.

Note: The times listed below are for Crown Heights only. Many factors influence the calculation of *zmanim* (halachic times) and it is not possible to achieve complete precision. It is therefore 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., the close of Shabbos).

1) *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 18, p. 341—emphasis in original.

2) from a *sichah* addressed to Nshei uBnos Chabad, *Sefer Hasichos* 5750, vol. 2, p. 485

FRIDAY, KISLEV 18

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*, etc.), when applicable.

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. We recite *shnayim mikra ve'echad targum*, i.e. we read twice each verse and once the commentary of Onkelos. It is customary to do this Friday after chatzos, midday. The best way to fulfill this mitzvah is to ensure that the reading has been completed before starting the Shabbos morning meal, and preferably even before the start of Shacharis.

We are obligated to check our pockets on *erev* Shabbos before the onset of Shabbos.

Candle lighting at 4:10 pm.

SHABBOS PARSHAS VAYISHLACH, 19 KISLEV CHAG HAGEULAH, ROSH HASHANAH OF CHASSIDUS

The main *Yud-Tes Kislev farbrengen* in 770 will take place on *motzoei* Shabbos.³

Yud-Tes Kislev will coincide with Shabbos in only two of the yearly calendric options. The first is a leap year that carries the *siman* (shorthand for the calendar's setup) of א"ן (Rosh Hashanah is on Shabbos—**zayin**, the seventh day; the months of *Cheshvan* and *Kislev* are *chaserim*—**ches**, “lacking,” with only 29 days each; and *Rosh Chodesh Nissan* is on a Tuesday—**gimmel**, the third day). The other occurrence is on a year such as the present, a non-leap year that carries the *siman* of א"ן (the same as above, with the exception of *Rosh Chodesh Nissan*, which will occur on a Sunday—**alef**, the first day of the week). Accordingly, *Yud-Tes Kislev* coincided with Shabbos in the years 5710, 5730, 5733, and 5737.

Today is the *yahrtzeit* of the Maggid of Mezritch. He passed away on Tuesday in the week of *Parshas Vayeishev*—Kislev 19,

3) Note that in 5737, it was postponed to Sunday night instead.

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*—towards 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.

In the final stanza of *Lecha Dodi*, the term *be-simchah* is recited (and not *be-rinah*).

Someone who accidentally recited the weekday *amidah* instead the *amidah* of Shabbos, and realizes their error while in the middle of *Bareich Aleinu*, should not say *ve-sein tal u'matar*. True, tonight marks the sixtieth day from the start of the seasonal *tekufah*, and it is therefore the correct time to request rain through switching to *ve-sein tal u'matar*; nevertheless, since it is Shabbos, this change is traditionally delayed until *motzoei* Shabbos. An individual must always follow the congregation, and since the community will only make that change after Shabbos, an individual who made the above error must similarly postpone introducing this change until after Shabbos.

Lu'ach Colel Chabad notes: "In every city, *Anash* gather 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."

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.

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, they should conduct *farbrengens* in many different locations. They should also inform people in those events of the next day's grand *farbrengen*. Then, on the next evening, the eve of the twentieth of Kislev, they should all gather in one location for a grand *farbrengen*."

Regarding holding *farbrengens* on the night of Shabbos, see references in footnote.⁴

4) See *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayeishev*, 20 Kislev 5744; such has been

On the eve of Yud-Tes Kislev 5749, the Rebbe instructed, “It is obvious that today’s study should begin with topics that are timely—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.”

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 ten powers of their soul. They should *farbreng* with their family. And they should *farbreng* with friends and

done on a number of occasions in 770. Also see *Sefer Hasichos* 5705, p. 18, and *Roshei Devarim Shabbos Parshas Terumah* 5750. Take note of *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 25, p. 347, and *Sefer Hasichos* 5758, p. 226.

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.”

Av Ha-rachamim is not recited before Musaf, and *Tzidkascha* is not recited during Minchah.

MOTZOEI SHABBOS, EVE OF 20 KISLEV CHAG HAGEULAH, ROSH HASHANAH OF CHASSIDUS

Shabbos ends at 5:14 pm.

Tonight marks sixty-one days since the onset of the Tishrei *tekufah* (autumn season), and therefore, outside *Eretz Yisroel*, the winter prayer of *v'sein tal u'matar li'verachah* is said in the Amidah in the blessing of *bareich aleinu*. This phrase replaces *v'sein berachah*, which is recited throughout the summer months. The winter phrase will continue to be recited on all weekdays until (and including) the *Minchah* service of *erev* Pesach.

The *gabbai* should **not** make an announcement between the blessing of *hashkiveinu* and the start of the Amidah reminding the congregation to say *tal u'matar*.

There are a number of laws that apply in case *v'sein tal u'matar* (or even just the word *u'matar*) was not said:

- 1) Someone who realized the error before pronouncing Hashem's name at the end of the blessing of *mevareich ha'shanim* should return to the words *v'sein tal u'matar*.
- 2) If Hashem's name in *mevareich ha'shanim* was already recited, add the words *v'sein tal u'matar li'verachah* immediately after *mevareich ha'shanim*, before beginning the following blessing of *tekah be'shofar*.
- 3) Once *tekah be'shofar* was begun, add the words *v'sein tal u'matar li'verachah* in the blessing of *shema koleinu* immediately after the words *reikam al teshiveinu*, and then continue *ki ata shomei'a*, etc.
- 4) If Hashem's name at the conclusion of *shema koleinu* was already pronounced, add the words *v'sein tal u'matar li'verachah* immediately after that blessing (after the words *shomei'a tefillah*), before beginning *retzei*.
- 5) After beginning *retzei*, but before taking three steps back

at the conclusion of the Amidah, return to *bareich aleinu* and continue from there.

If Hashem's name at the conclusion of *ve-sechezena*—but before concluding the blessing with *ha-machazir shechinaso le-tziyon*—was pronounced, conclude with *lamdeini chukecha*, and then return to *bareich aleinu*.

The same applies if realizing the error after reciting Hashem's name in either of the two subsequent blessings—at the conclusion of *modim (ha-tov shim'cha)* and at the conclusion of *sim shalom (ha-mevareich es amo ba-shalom)*.

6) After concluding the *amidah* by taking three steps back, or at least having recited the second *yihyu le'ratzon* (which is considered the conclusion of the *amidah*), the entire *amidah* must be repeated.

7) If the error was not realized until the time of the next prayer service, the *amidah* of that service must be recited twice—the first time for the current service and the second time as a way to make up for the invalid *amidah* of the previous service. However, if *v'sein tal u'matar* is omitted in the *Minchah* service of *erev Shabbos*, do not recite the *Shabbos amidah* of *Maariv* twice. The same law applies if *v'sein tal u'matar* was omitted in the *Minchah* service of *erev Pesach*.

The following is a general principle in halachah: For thirty days after a seasonal change in a prayer, someone who is in doubt whether the correct version was recited must assume that the incorrect version was recited out of habit. However, after thirty days have elapsed (this year, beginning from *Maariv* on the eve of 21 Teves (Jan. 4), it can be assumed that, having grown accustomed to the new version (in this case: *v'sein tal u'matar*), the newer and correct version was indeed recited.⁵

Vihi No'am is recited as usual at the conclusion of tonight's *Maariv*.

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*.

Farbrengen tonight in 770 at 8:30 pm.

⁵ See at length in the letter from the Secretariat of the Badatz, dated Friday Parshas Vayechi 5775, which appeared then in the Badatz bulletin board in 770.

SUNDAY, 20 KISLEV: CHAG HAGEULAH

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 [*farbrenge*], *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 a Tuesday, 20 Kislev, 5557 (1796), at the printing house at 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 second part. The Previous Rebbe concludes that this was an enigma (*va’yehee l’peleh*) in the eyes of Chassidim.⁷

CHANUKAH PREPARATIONS

The menorah may not be lit with oil that is repulsive or causes a repulsive smell, or with oil that is spiritually repulsive due to its having been acquired through theft.⁸

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;

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

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

8) Regarding stolen oil: It is a halachic principle that *mitzvah ha-ba’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 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 his 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*.

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, but 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.

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 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.⁹

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 carefully considered, so that the light continues to burn for the appropriate amount of time.)

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

⁹ 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*.

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.)

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

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?”¹⁰

The Rambam writes: “The Chanukah lights are an extremely precious mitzvah. 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 u-varuch shemo*.

Note: 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 mitzvah¹¹, 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**,

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

11) 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. *ha-ro’eh sukkah*.

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 place 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).

Those organizing Chanukah parties for friends or relatives should time and 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.

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*’¹² 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’).”¹³

12) Bereishis 46:28

13) 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

Menorah Lighting Times for Crown Heights

Plag Hamincha (lit., half of Mincha) is the earliest possible time to light candles for public lightings (and for individuals in extenuating circumstances). The best time to light is after *shkiah* (sunset), between Mincha 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 *shkiah* 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*.

Thursday, 24 Kislev

(December 10)

1st of Chanukah

Plag Haminchah - 3:31 PM

Shkiah - 4:28 PM

Chatzos - 11:49 PM

Monday, 28 Kislev

(December 14)

5th Night of Chanukah

Plag Haminchah - 3:32 PM

Shkiah - 4:29 PM

Chatzos - 11:51 PM

Friday, 25 Kislev

(December 11)

2nd Night of Chanukah

Plag Haminchah - 3:31 PM

Shabbos Candles - 4:10 PM

(18 minutes before sunset)

Tuesday, 29 Kislev

(December 15)

6th Night of Chanukah

Plag Haminchah - 3:32 PM

Shkiah - 4:29 PM

Chatzos - 11:51 PM

Motzoei Shabbos, Eve of 27 Kislev (December 12)

3rd Night of Chanukah

Shabbos Ends - 5:15 PM

Chatzos - 11:50 PM

Wednesday, 1 Teves (December 16)

7th Night of Chanukah

Plag Haminchah - 3:32 PM

Shkiah - 4:29 PM

Chatzos - 11:51 PM

Sunday, 27 Kislev

(December 13)

4th Night of Chanukah

Plag Haminchah - 3:31 PM

Shkiah - 4:28 PM

Chatzos - 11:50 PM

Thursday, 2 Teves

(December 17)

8th Night of Chanukah

Plag Haminchah - 3:33 PM

Shkiah - 4:30 PM

Chatzos - 11:52 PM

THURSDAY, 24 KISLEV EREV CHANUKAH

Tachnun is not recited during Mincha.

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

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, there must be at least a *minyán* present while the candles burn—preferably at the time that the blessings are recited.

The shul's menorah should be on the southern wall, its lamps stretching from 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 (not during) Mincha, 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 *shkiah* (sunset); it can be kindled any time after *plag haminchah*. The *chazzan* recites three blessings; since it is the first time, *Shehechianu* is recited. A mourner should not light the shul menorah on the first night of Chanukah for this reason.

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.

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 at the *chazzan's* home observing and fulfilling their obligation through his private menorah lighting, he should only repeat the first two blessings—not the blessing of *shehechianu*.

THURSDAY NIGHT, EVE OF 25 KISLEV FIRST NIGHT OF CHANUKAH

The time and place for the menorah lighting 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 at the correct time.

According to Chabad custom, we light the menorah at home immediately after the true moment of *shkiah*, 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 in its proper time, before *tzeis ha-kochavim*, and also with regard to *mitvza* Chanukah—encouraging and facilitating the lighting of a menorah on time by as many Jews as possible. See footnote for more detail.¹⁴

If you are unable to light the menorah before the time for Maariv, 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*) of *hamotzi* or *mezonos*—or on fruit and other non-*mezonos* foods, even in larger quantities. Nevertheless, those who are

14) 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 *sicha* 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 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.”

extra scrupulous avoid snacking as well.¹⁵

If you began 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 *mitvza* 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, wherever possible, to refrain from eating bread or *mezonos* more than the volume of *kebeitzah* before lighting the menorah.

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 and has no household with him should light *with* a blessing.

¹⁵) See Hebrew version for references.

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.

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.

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.

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 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 re-

inauguration of the Second Temple by the Maccabees) that is commemorated with the festival of Chanukah.¹⁶

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*?¹⁷

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

Women are equally obligated in this mitzvah. The custom in the homes of the Chabad Rebbeim is that women do not light their own *menoros*, but fulfill their obligation through their fathers lighting. Married women fulfill their obligation via their husbands. A lady who is unmarried or whose husband will not be lighting in their home must kindle the flames personally or via a representative.

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.

If circumstances permit the 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 light also an electric menorah, without reciting the blessings.

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."¹⁸

16) *Sefer Hasichos* 5748, p. 162

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

18) This topic is elaborated in the Day-by-Day Halachic Guide (Hebrew)

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.”¹⁹

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 suppertime, 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 wear Shabbos clothing when lighting the menorah, however a *gartel* is worn.

It is a mitzvah to place the menorah within a *tefach* (handbreadth) 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.

The lights of the menorah must be situated at least three *tefachim* (approximately 10 inches) from the floor but no higher than ten *tefachim* (approximately 31 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 30 feet) or higher it must be relit.

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

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 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.

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

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*.)

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

Law of Redemption:

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.”²⁰

According to the Rebbe’s explanation in *Sichas 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.²¹

20) *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.”

21) Note that according to one version of our Sages’ teaching, “All the

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) *le-hadlik neir Chanukah* (2) *she-asa 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 *mitzaim*) must repeat them when lighting his own menorah at home. He should not repeat the third blessing (*Shehechyanu*) unless others fulfill their obligation through him. (For additional considerations, see above regarding lighting the shul's menorah.)

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

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.

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.²²

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 HaChayim* (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 – *le-hadlik*, "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 u'Teshuvos Be'eir Moshe* (vol. 8, 17).

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

If safety considerations require moving a lit menorah, it may be relocated within this time frame. 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 the safer location to begin with.

It is forbidden to make use of the illumination provided by the Chanukah lights.²³ 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.²⁴

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.

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.

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.

23) 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.

24) *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).

If you forgot to recite *V'al Hanissim* during the *amidah*, see footnote.²⁵

Mivtza Chanukah: Every effort should be expended to ensure that a Chanukah menorah is lit in 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 within a half-hour.

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.

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.

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

It is customary to serve foods that are prepared with oil in order to recall the miracle of the oil. In *Sefer Hasichos* 5752²⁶, the Rebbe explains this custom at length.

25) Someone who forgot to recite *V'al Hanissim* during the *amidah*, but recalls the omission before pronouncing Hashem’s name in the blessing of *ha-tov shimcha*, returns to the correct place for *V'al Hanissim* and continues from there. If they already said Hashem’s name, they should not return at all. (In that case, some say to insert it before reciting the second *yihyu le-ratzon*, by saying: *ha-rachaman hu ya-aseh lanu nissim, kemo she-asah la-avoseinu, ba-yamim ha-heim bi-zman ha-zeh, bimei Matisyahu... leshimcha ha-gadol.*)

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

The blessing for doughnuts is *mezonos* (with an after-blessing of *al ha-michiyah*). This is true even if one 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 at the start of which one washed for bread and recited *hamotzi*. 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 doughnuts that are not deep fried in oil—eating such doughnuts for the sake of satiation must be done during a meal for the sake of satiation, and thereby included in the blessing of *hamotzi*.

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

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 footnote²⁷.

It is customary to wish each other *ah freilichen Chanukah* (“Happy Chanukah!”) or *ah gutten chanukah* (“Have a good Chanukah!”).

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

27) Someone who forgot to recite *V'al Hanissim* but realized the omission before pronouncing Hashem’s name at the conclusion of the following blessing (*al ha-aretz ve-al Hamazon*), returns to the correct place for reciting *V'al Hanissim* and continues from there. If they realized after pronouncing Hashem’s name, they do not return at all, because there is no binding obligation to recite *V'al Hanissim* in *Birchas Hamazon*. If they wish—and this is the appropriate procedure to follow—upon reaching the section for adding a *ha-rachaman* (right before *ha-rachaman hu ye-zakeinu*), recite: *Ha-rachaman hu ya-aseh lanu nissim, kemo she-asah la-avoseinu, ba-yamim ha-heim bi-zman ha-zeh, bimei Matisyahu... leshimcha ha-gadol.*

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 *Chassidische 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, *ba-yamim ha-heim bizman ha-zeh*, ‘In those days [of yore as well as] in the current era.’”²⁸

FRIDAY, 25 KISLEV: FIRST DAY OF CHANUKAH

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 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* in order to complete the *amidah* in time to respond to *kedushah* or *modim* together with the congregation.

The Sages 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*.

The complete Hallel is recited on each day of Chanukah, followed by *Chatzi Kaddish* and a Torah reading comprised of three *aliyos* from *Parshas Naso*.

Do not verbally interrupt the recitation of Hallel to speak of other matters, except for those matter for which it is permitted to interrupt the blessing preceding the recitation of the *shema*.

An *avel* (within his period of mourning) may lead the

28) *Sefer HaSichos*

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.

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.

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 following statement is recorded in *Sha'alos u'Teshuvos Tzafnas Panei'ach HaChadashos*²⁹: "...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 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 Jew. 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!"³⁰

Check your pockets on *erev* Shabbos before the onset of Shabbos. This is especially important for those whose the same Shabbos / Yom Tov clothing earlier this week in honor of *Chof Kislev*.

In today's reading of *shnayim mikra v'echad targum*,³¹ the custom is to say all *Haftoros* relevant to Shabbos. In accordance with the custom of the Chabad Rebbeim, the *Haftorah* of *Vayeshev* is read after completing *shnayim mikra ve-echad targum* on *erev* Shabbos, while the Torah portion from *shevi'i* until the conclusion is read once again (in the manner of *shnayim mikra ve-echad targum*) on Shabbos

29) Vol. 1, 45

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

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

morning, but this time it is followed by the *Haftorah* of Shabbos Chanukah.

Minchah is recited earlier than usual, because it precedes the lighting of the menorah. If there is no early *minyana* available, you should first light the menorah and then join the regular *minyana* for Minchah. The shul menorah is lit after Minchah—anytime after *plag haminchah* (3:31 pm).

It is appropriate to complete all Shabbos preparations before lighting the menorah, 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 *shkiah*, is at 4:10 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.

Sefer HaMminhagim 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 [Previous] 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.³²

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 is typically the case when introducing a Jew to Chanukah on *mitzaim*.)

When preparing the menorah on the second night of Chanukah, a new lamp is added to the left of the previous night’s lamp. Begin kindling the menorah with the newest lamp. It is customary to be stringent and to avoid lighting one Chanukah lamp from another.

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

32) See also *Kuntres BaKodesh Penimah*, p. 24

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 *shkiah*—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.

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

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*) 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 object³³. Chanukah gelt for Shabbos should be given Friday or Sunday.³⁴

FRIDAY NIGHT, EVE OF 26 KISLEV SECOND NIGHT OF CHANUKAH

Kabbalas Shabbos is recited as usual. *V'al Hanissim* is added during Maariv. If you forgot *V'al Hanissim*, do not repeat the *amidah*.

V'al Hanissim is added to *Birchas Hamazon*, as well as *Retzei*. If Chanukah was mentioned with *V'al Hanissim* but *Retzei* was not recited, bentsch again, but do not recite *V'al Hanissim* again.

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 touch the menorah, its tray, and the chair on which the tray is placed—even after the flames have gone out. Even if the menorah is no longer on the tray or chair, the tray and chair may not be moved. However,

33) *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayeishev* 5750, *Sefer Hasichos* 5750 I:194

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

once the menorah has gone out, you may move these objects in an indirect way, 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.

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, then once the flames have gone out, the tray—even with the menorah on top—may be moved directly on Shabbos.

According to alternative 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 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.

(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.)

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.

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.³⁵

SHABBOS PARSHAS VAYESHEV, 26 KISLEV: SECOND DAY OF CHANUKAH, SHABBOS MEVORCHIM TEVES

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.

35) *Shabbos Chanukah* 5742. Nevertheless, it is customary to sing its final section independently—*Al nisecha ve-al nifl'osecha. lehdos ule-hallel etc.* Indeed, the Rebbe encouraged that this part be sung on numerous such occasions.

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).³⁶

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

Add *V'al Hanissim* in Shacharis.

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

Two *sifrei Torah* are used today. *Parshas Vayeshev* is read from the first (all seven *aliyos*), after which the second *sefer Torah* is placed on the *bimah* alongside the first, (so as not to leave a void between the presence of the first and second Torah). *Chatzi Kaddish* is recited. *Hagbah* and *glilah* is performed on the first Torah. *Maftir* is then read from the second *torah*. It is the offerings of the *Nassi* to the tribe of Yissachar (*Ba-yom ha-sheini*). The second Torah is then raised and wrapped.

The *Haftorah* begins *rani ve-simchi* and describes the lights of the golden menorah as seen by Zechariah.

The blessing over the coming month of Teves is recited. This month, the *molad* will occur on Tuesday morning, at 4:51 am, plus 2 (out of 18) *chalakim*. Rosh Chodesh Teves will be on Wednesday.

Av Ha-rachamim is not recited before Musaf, nor is *Tzidkasecha* recited during Minchah.

Today is a day to *farbrenge*.

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 *farbrenge* which often involves drinking alcoholic beverages. The common custom in Chassidic communities is to follow their standard practice of extending the *se'udah shlishis* beyond the official conclusion of Shabbos, as is done

36) 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.

usually. In fact, this exact scenario occurred at the Rebbe's *farbrengen*.³⁷

MOTZOEI SHABBOS, EVE OF 27 KISLEV THIRD NIGHT OF CHANUKAH

Shabbos ends at 5:15 pm.

Maariv should not be delayed more than usual tonight.

Recite *Ata Chonantanu* and *V'al Hanisim* in Maariv. *Vihi 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 ha-mavdil bein kodesh le-chol* before kindling the menorah.

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*.

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*.³⁸ In a *yechidus kelalis*, 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 morning.³⁹ The following year (5749), the Rebbe took an alternative approach and concluded that it is appropriate to refrain from actually giving the *gelt* on *motzoei Shabbos*.⁴⁰

SUNDAY, 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).

37) *Shabbos Chanukah*, *Parshas Miketz* 5744

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

39) 24 Kislev, 5748

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

The prayers of today and the remaining days of Chanukah (except Shabbos and Rosh Chodesh) are the same as Friday. The order of Torah reading for each day of Chanukah is recorded in the *Siddur*.

MONDAY, 28 KISLEV: FOURTH DAY OF CHANUKAH

On this date, King Yehoyakim burned the original *megillaseichah* that Yirmiyahu *haNavi* had dictated to his disciple, the prophet Baruch, foretelling the destruction of the *Beis Hamikdash*.⁴¹

MONDAY NIGHT, EVE OF KISLEV 29: 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.

The Rebbe Rashab would distribute Chanukah *gelt* on the fourth or fifth night of Chanukah. In 5748, 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.

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 *simcha*, 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 his 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

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

gelt.⁴² However, there is a superiority in giving coins rather than bills from a *halachic* perspective, as the Rebbe explained during a Tzivos Hashem rally⁴³.

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 law, history, etc., of Chanukah, and also in general Torah study.⁴⁴

“Chanukah *gelt* is primarily for children, as we have mentioned on many occasions. At the same time, the [Frierdiker] Rebbe told us that it was widely known that as early as the times of the Tzemach Tzedek, [the 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.” (*Roshei Devarim Sichas Zos Chanukah* 5749 [*Achar Tefilas Minchah*]) “The [Frierdiker] Rebbe **personally** gave his daughters Chanukah *gelt*, and continued even after their marriages.”⁴⁵

It has become customary in many communities for school children to deliver Chanukah *gelt* and other gifts to the teachers who teach them Torah.⁴⁶

TUESDAY, 29 KISLEV

FIFTH DAY OF CHANUKAH, 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.⁴⁷

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

43) see *Sichas Neir Ches d'Chanukah* 5748

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

45) *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 20, p. 451, fn. 36. See also *Sichas Motzoei Shabbos Vayeshev* 5738 that the Frierdiker 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.

46) Regarding the use of *ma'aser* money as Chanukah *gelt* for Torah teachers, see asktherav.com #1981.

47) vol. 15, p. 545

TUESDAY NIGHT, EVE OF 1 TEVES**SIXTH NIGHT OF CHANUKAH, ROSH CHODESH TEVES**

Ya'aleh Veyavo and *V'al Hanissim* are inserted into the night *amidah*. If you forgot to say *Ya'aleh Veyavo* **tonight**, you do not repeat the *amidah*.⁴⁸

During *Birchas Hamazon*, both *ve-al ha-nisim* and *Ya'aleh ve-yavo* are included.

WEDNESDAY, TEVES 1**SIXTH DAY OF CHANUKAH, ROSH CHODESH TEVES**

Add *Ya'aleh Veyavo* and *V'al Hanissim* in *Shacharis*. If you forgot to recite *Ya'aleh Veyavo*, see footnote.⁴⁹

48) However, someone who realizes the error before pronouncing Hashem's name in the blessing of *ha-machazir* should return to *Ya'aleh Ve'yavo*, and then continue once again with *Ve-sechezenah*. If Hashem's name has already been pronounced, however, do not return for *Ya'aleh Veyavo*.

One who recites *Ya'aleh Veyavo* correctly, but then absentmindedly continues as if reciting *Birchas Hamazon*—with *U'venei Yerushalayim*, instead of the next part of the *amidah*, namely, *Ve-sechezena*—must return to *Retzei*. That is the case only if the blessing of *U'venei* was recited in its entirety. However, if Hashem's name was pronounced but *not* the rest of the blessing, then there is no need to return to *Retzei*; it is sufficient to conclude the blessing with *ha-machazir* instead of *bonei ve-rachamav*, and continue with *Modim* as usual.

Interestingly, the theme of *bonei ve-rachamav* ("Rebuild Yerushalayim ... who in His mercy rebuilds Yerushalayim") is similar to the theme of *ha-machazir* ("May our eyes behold Your return to Tziyon in mercy ... who restores His *Shechinah* to Tziyon"). In fact, on one occasion, these two requests are merged into a single ending for a blessing, namely, the conclusion of *Nacheim* ("Who consoles Tziyon and rebuilds Yerushalayim") that is recited on Tisha B'av. Nevertheless, these remain two very distinct blessings, and are presented entirely separately in the *amidah*: one is the blessing of *Ve-lirushalayim iracha ... bonei yerushalayim*; the other appears three blessings later as *Ve-sechezena eineinu ... ha-machazir shechinaso le-tziyon*. Therefore, they cannot serve as replacements for each other. (See the Hebrew version of this publication for highly detailed references. See also *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 24, p. 267, fn. 49.)

49) Someone who forgets to recite *Ya'aleh Veyavo* in *Shacharis* should do as follows:

In *Shacharis*, if the error is realized before pronouncing Hashem's name in the blessing of *ha-machazir* return to *Ya'aleh Veyavo* and continue from there.

If they already said *ha-machazir* without starting *Modim*, immediately recite *Ya'aleh Veyavo* before continuing directly with *Modim*.

If *modim* was recited and the subsequent blessing almost concluded, having already pronounced Hashem's name at the end of the blessing, conclude the blessing with *lamdeini chukecha* instead of *ha-tov shimcha*. It is then necessary to return to *Retzei*.

The same applies to someone who reached the blessing of *ha-mevoreich ess amo ba-shalom*, and has recited Hashem's name but not concluded that

The complete Hallel is followed by *V'avraham Zaken*, *Kaddish Tiskabel*, *Shir shel Yom* (*Revi'i ba-Shabbos*), *Hoshi'einu*, *Barchi Nafshi*, and *Kaddish Yasom*.

Two *sifrei Torah* are read during *Shacharis*. The first is used for the *Rosh Chodesh* reading and requires three *aliyos*. (Kohen until *revi's ha-hin*, Levi until *ve-niska*, and Yisrael—*Uv'roshei chadsheichem* until *ve-nisko*.) 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* (*ba-yom ha-shishi* etc., but no further).

The Torah reading is followed by *Chatzi Kaddish*; *hagba'hah* and *gelilah*; *Ashrei* and *U'va Le-tziyon*—the *chazzan* does not conclude *U'va Le-tziyon* 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*. *Val Hanisim* is added to *Musaf*.

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.)

A law that will become relevant with the Redemption:

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.

A law that will become relevant with the Redemption: We will all ascend to the *beis hamikdash* in *Yerushalayim*—not just three times a year, for *Pesach*, *Shavuos*, and *Sukkos*, but also for each *Shabbos* and for each *Rosh Chodesh*. (*Yeshayah* 10:23.)

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*.⁵⁰

blessing.

If both of these blessings were recited before realizing the omission, but before reciting the second *Yih'yu Le-ratzon*, return to *Retzei*.

Once the second *Yih'yu Le-ratzon* was recited, the *amidah* is effectively concluded, and the *amidah* must restart from the beginning.

If the omission is realized only after praying *Musaf*, do not repeat the *amidah* of *Shacharis*.

⁵⁰ See *Tosefos Yom Tov* to the Mishnah, and *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 4, p. 1105, fn. 9. However, note Rashi's comment in *Eiruvin* 41a, s.v., *mib'nei sanav*,

“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.”

In Minchah, both *Ya’aleh Veyavo* and *V’al Hanisim* are included.

THURSDAY NIGHT, EVE OF 3 TEVES 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 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.

FRIDAY, 3 TEVES EIGHTH DAY OF CHANUKAH, “ZOS CHANUKAH”

For today’s Torah reading, the Kohen’s *aliyah* is from *Ba-yom ha-shemini* until *melei’ah ketores*. Levi is from *Par echad* until *ben pedatzhur*. Yisrael is from *Ba-yom ha-tshi’i* until *kein asa es ha-menorah*.

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*

which implies that the donation was arranged through lottery.

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.

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 *farbrenge*.

The Rebbe once instructed that the Alter Rebbe’s *ma’amar* that explains the greatness of Zos Chanukah be studied today.⁵¹ The main point, the Rebbe explained, is to live with this *ma’amar*.

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.”⁵²

On Zos Chanukah 5734, the Rebbe said: “The [Frierdiker] 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 *Poilshe 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 *Poilshe sefarim* because in this case, the teaching concurs with the teachings of Chabad Chassidus.⁵³

See also *Igros Kodesh*: “It was a common teaching in Poland that ... the *gmar chasimah* occurs in the month of Kislev, during Chanukah.”⁵⁴

51) see *Likkutei Torah Derushim LeShemini Atzeres*

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

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

54) vol. 14, p. 112. See also *Likkutei Torah Derushim LeShemini Atzeres* (p.

Candle lighting is at 4:12 pm.

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 Hanisim* during *Birchas Hamazon*.⁵⁵ That is, only if at least a *kezayis* of food was eaten before sunset (*sheki'ah*), and also, if Maariv has not been recited during the meal.

Since tonight is Shabbos, someone who wishes to extend an *erev* Shabbos meal into the night should, when the appropriate hour arrives (after *sheki'ah*), spread a cloth to cover the *challah* and then recite *kiddush* over wine. However, the blessing of *borei pri ha-gafen* may be recited only if no wine was consumed previously at that meal. Following *kiddush*, at least a *kezayis* of *challah* must be eaten. At the conclusion of the meal, both *V'al Hanisim* for Chanukah as well as *Retzei* for Shabbos are included in *Birchas Hamazon*. Only then should Maariv be recited.

A woman (or if circumstances require, man) who is required to light Shabbos candles should not extend a meal from *erev* Shabbos into Shabbos. Rather, they must end the meal, light the Shabbos candles at the appropriate time, and not resume eating until after *kiddush*.

SHABBOS PARSHAS MIKEITZ, 4 TEVES

For Chanukah's influence today, despite the lack of an official *Isru Chag*, see footnote.⁵⁶

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.

55) 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.

56) 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 *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.)

"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]

Law of Redemption: Some authorities, such as *Minchas Chinuch*,⁵⁷ 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.⁵⁸

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, 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: Once Chanukah has ended, *bikurim* (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 *bikurim* are concerned, and they must be kept until after Shavuos. This is because the Torah specifies that *bikurim* must be “that which you bring from your land,” meaning that *bikurim* 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

Chanukah, the more discernible is its influence. This is especially true of the first day following Chanukah.” (*Sichas Zos Chanukah* 5749.)

57) *Mitzvah* 30:6

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

growing in the fields and orchards.

This raises the question of the *bikurim* season in the future era,⁵⁹ when fruit will indeed be found growing in the field even after Chanukah. For “trees will bring forth fruit every day,”⁶⁰ and “*the ploughman will encounter the reaper*” due to the instant and constant growth of produce.⁶¹

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

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!

Shabbos ends at 5:17 pm.

SUNDAY, 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!’”⁶² Rashbi considered this day on which the news of the tragedy arrived as if it were the day of the event itself.⁶³

*Shalsheless HaYachas*⁶⁴ 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*.”

“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

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

60) *Shabbos* 30b

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

62) Yechezkel 33:21

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

64) included in the introduction to *Hayom Yom*

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*.

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

TUESDAY, 7 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*”⁶⁵ as per Chabad custom.⁶⁶

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).⁶⁷

WEDNESDAY, 8 TEVES

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.”⁶⁸ That day was “as difficult for the Jews as the day on which the Golden Calf was

65) 45:27

66) See entry for Shabbos *Parshas Vayigash*

67) 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.

68) *Megillas Ta'anis*, quoted in *Shulchan Aruch*

made.⁶⁹ The Rebbe explains this concept in *Likkutei Sichos* and *Sefer Hasichos* 5752.⁷⁰

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.

THURSDAY, 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.⁷¹ It has since been explained that Ezra *HaSofer* died on this date. The commentators to *Megillas Taanis* describe additional events. The Rebbe's explanation appears in *Sefer Hasichos* 5749.⁷²

Tonight is nittel. Make sure to finish Chitas and Rambam before sunset.

Nittel:

The Rebbe notes that *Nittel Nacht* (Night of Nittel) occurs often during or in proximity to the days of Chanukah.⁷³

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

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*

69) *Maseches Sofrim*

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

71) *Megillas Ta'anis*, quoted in *Shulchan Aruch*

72) *Vayigash*, 9 Teves

73) *Sefer Hasichos Shabbos Parshas Vayeishev* 5750

Kodesh and *Likkutei Sichos*.⁷⁴ 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.

The timing of *Nittel Nacht* does not follow the Jewish calendar, 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.⁷⁵

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.

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 *chessed*, or to take care of the home, and the like.”⁷⁶

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 *ma’amar* to Shabbos morning instead.⁷⁷

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

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

76) Printed in *Sefer HaSichos*. See further in the original *sichah*.

77) 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.

THURSDAY 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. This is especially relevant this year, for on the upcoming Yud Shevat, we will have completed seventy years from the Rebbe's acceptance of leadership (in the year 5711).

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*.

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 ha-shachar*) 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* but not more.

FRIDAY, EREV SHABBOS VAYIGASH ASARAH B'TEVES—A DAY OF REJOICING-TO-BE

“In one aspect at least, the fast of *Asarah b'Teves* even nowadays is more severe than other fasts: If it coincides with *erev Shabbos*, the fast must be completed all the way until nightfall (*tzeis ha-kochavim*). This is true even for those who prayed Maariv for Shabbos early, while it was still daytime. This ruling is upheld even according to those authorities that prohibit fasting on the other fast days that coincide with *erev Shabbos*, once Maariv has been recited.”⁷⁸

“The *halachah* states that ‘regarding all of these four fasts,

78) *Sichas Asarah b'Teves 5749*, in *Sefer Hasichos* p. 136.

if they coincide with Shabbos they must be postponed.’ Nevertheless, *Asarah b’Teves* carries a stringency not found in the other three fasts, and that is because [nowadays,] it is the only one that is able to coincide with *erev* Shabbos (as it does this year). When it does, we must continue fasting until nightfall even if we recited Maariv for Shabbos while it was still daytime.”⁷⁹

The fast commemorates the date on which the king of Babylon laid siege to Yerushalayim. 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. Consult a *Rav* if necessary.

Dawn and the start of the fast are at **5:49 am**.

Law of Redemption: 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*; the Rebbe draws particular relevance to the Fast of Teves.⁸⁰

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.”⁸¹

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

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 only a small amount of food was eaten accidentally (less

79) *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 25, p. 267, fn. 5

80) *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.

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

than the size of *koseves* [a large date], eaten within the time frame of *bich'dei achilas pras*), or a small quantity of liquid was drunk (less than a *revi'is*), 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 be-yom tzom ha-ta'anis zeh* ("Answer us on this fast day"), rather than *ta'aniseinu* ("our fasting").

The Torah is read during Shacharis and Minchah, and the *Haftorah* is read during Minchah, as on every fast day.

In Shacharis and Minchah, the *chazzan* adds *Aneinu* in the *amidah*, between the blessings of *go'eil Yisrael* and *Refa'einu*. If he omitted *Aneinu*, see footnote.⁸²

During Shacharis, *Selichos* are recited.

This is the order for Shacharis: *Tachanun*, *Selichos*. *Avinu Malkeinu*, *Va'anachnu Lo Nay'da* followed by *Chatzi Kaddish*. Reading of the Torah. The *aliyos* are read from the section of *Va-yechal Moshe*.

When a *chosson* is present for the prayers, or if a *bris* will be held, or the like, the custom practiced in 770⁸³ is for the congregation to proceed with *Selichos* but to omit *viduy*, *tachanun*, and *Avinu malkeinu* from the prayers.⁸⁴

This same reading is repeated for Minchah, with the addition of the *Haftorah* of *Dirshu Hashem*.

On a regular weekday—and especially on *erev Shabbos*—it is appropriate to ensure that Minchah is completed before sunset (*sheki'ah*). This is all the more important on a fast day, for a number of reasons and concerns. However, if this was not done—it is already twilight (*bein ha-shamashos*) and there are those who still have not prayed Minchah—it is permissible to proceed with reading the Torah and the *Haftorah*, and

82) If the *chazzan* omitted *Aneinu* and has not yet pronounced Hashem's name at the conclusion of *Refa'einu*, he should return to recite *Aneinu*. If he already pronounced Hashem's name, he should recite *Aneinu* in the blessing of *Shema Koleinu* as each individual does when praying Minchah silently. In that case, he should conclude the blessing with the words: *ha-oneh ba-eis tzarah ve-shomei'a tefillah*. If he already passed *Shema Koleinu*, he should recite *Aneinu* as a passage for itself after the blessing of *Sim Shalom*.

83) 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.

84) 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 *chosson's* presence, or of the *bris* that will take place.

praying Minchah, despite the late hour.⁸⁵

During Minchah, each individual recites *Aneinu* in *Shema Koleinu*. If someone forgot to recite it, see footnote.⁸⁶

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: *Hodu, Pasach Eliyahu* (this year), *Korbanos. Ashrei* followed by *Chatzi Kaddish*.

The reading of the Torah (*Va-yechal*) and the *Haftorah*.

Yehalelu followed by *Chatzi Kaddish. Amidah* with the addition of *Aneinu. Kaddish Tiskabel. Aleinu* followed by *Kaddish Yasom* and then *Al Tira* and *Ach Tzaddikim*. If an *avel* is present, he recites *Mishnayos* followed by *Kaddish d'Rabbanan*. This year, neither *tachanun* nor the longer version of *Avinu Malkeinu* are recited.

After Minchah, it is customary to listen to *divrei kivushin*—a speech urging self-improvement and further advancement in the service of Hashem. This is done despite today being *erev Shabbos*.⁸⁷

“We have repeatedly discussed the *minhag Yisrael* of delivering *divrei kevushin* [an address that motivates its audience to self-improve] following the Minchah service on fast days ... to inspire people to *teshuvah*. However, when the fast of *Asarah b'Teves* coincides with *erev Shabbos*, there is room to debate whether this custom should be implemented:

“Firstly, on the afternoon of *erev Shabbos*, people are extremely preoccupied with their *Shabbos* preparations. According to Torah, we should *run* to ensure that all of the *Shabbos* preparations are completed in time ... Seemingly, there is simply no time to stop and listen to *divrei kevushin*. Secondly, we are not permitted to experience sadness on *Shabbos*. It is

85) The *Acharonim* cast doubt on the appropriateness of reciting *Aneinu* once *Shabbos* has begun (e.g., see *Sha'alos u'Teshuvos Devar Yehoshu'a, Yoreh De'ah*, 63). However, there is no issue with a *chazzan's* recital of *Birchas Kohanim* after *shekiyah*. (See *Shulchan Aruch Admor Hazaken*, 623:8 even regarding *duchaning*, which must be recited before *tzeis ha-kochavim*, which implies that before *tzeis ha-kochavim*, it is still permissible. If so, this is certainly true of the *chazzan's* recital of *Birchas Kohanim*. (This however requires further analysis: why does the *Alter Rebbe* conclude with a mention of “daytime,” and also, did he reverse this decision in his *Siddur* that was published later, in which many earlier decisions were reversed?)

86) If one forgot to recite *Aneinu* in the *amidah* of Mincha, but remembered it before stepping back at the end of the *amidah*, they should recite it after *Elokai Netzor*. If they had already stepped back, they should not recite it at all.

87) See *Sichas Asarah B'Teves* 5744.

obvious that we cannot *enter* Shabbos in a morose frame of mind either. And even before the entry of Shabbos, we are to engage in our Shabbos preparations joyfully.

“Now, as far as the actual fast is concerned, we have an *obligation* to fast—as recorded in the *Shulchan Aruch*. This must be observed all the way until the end of the day, despite the fact that *Asarah b’Teves* coincides with *erev* Shabbos. By contrast, the delivery of *divrei kevushin* is merely a *minhag* (custom). There is room to question whether this practice remains relevant when the fast coincides with *erev* Shabbos.

“It is also worth noting that it is extremely rare for one the four fasts to coincide with *erev* Shabbos ... which could lead us to conclude that the force of the *minhag* is removed by the rarity of the circumstance ... in accordance with the principle that the force of a *minhag* does not apply to an uncommon case.

“That said, there is a simple solution to maintaining the *minhag* even when *Asarah b’Teves* coincides with *erev* Shabbos, as we will explain: The main theme of a fast day is that it is *yom ratzon la-Hashem*, a day of special Divine favor ... Naturally, an occasion of Divine favor is a happy experience. Furthermore, the point of fasting is to engage in “one of the methods of *teshuvah*” ... and the *perfection* of *teshuvah* is *teshuvah ila’ah*, “higher *teshuvah*,” which is conducted specifically with great joy. Accordingly, an address that focuses on the theme of the fast day, *divrei kevushin*, can be devoted to joyful matters, to the idea that it is a time of special divine favor, to *teshuvah ila’ah* that must be performed with tremendous happiness, and similar concepts. In this way, the address will not contradict our obligation to avoid sadness on Shabbos.

“Furthermore, even the concept of affliction associated with abstaining from food and drink, along with the part of *divrei kevushin* that calls for *mussar*, rebuke for inappropriate matters—both of which are not happy experiences—are reframed as *preparations* for the complete joy of Shabbos. This can be understood in light of the teaching in *Igeres Hakodesh*,⁸⁸ that as a preparation and preface to *teshuvah ila’ah*, we must first experience *teshuvah tata’ah*, the lower [ordinary] form of *teshuvah*. The regular *teshuvah* completes and amplifies the joy of *teshuvah ila’ah* ... Consequently, even literal *divrei kevushin*, meaning words of *mussar* and the like, remain relevant today—as a preparation for Shabbos, for they allow us to arrive at the superior experience of *teshuvah ila’ah* on Shabbos itself.”⁸⁹

Those who are scrupulous to avoid showering or bathing on a fast day should not follow this stringency today; they should

88) ch. 10

89) *Sichas Asarah b’Teves* 5744

wash themselves in honor of Shabbos. Nor should one be stringent to avoid cutting hair or nails, or laundering clothes.

If it is necessary to taste the food that is being readied for Shabbos for the sake of accurate preparation, one may rely on those authorities that permit tasting a small quantity and then spitting it out.

Today we recite *shnayim mikra ve'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 clothing earlier this week in honor of *Hei Teves*.

Those who accept Shabbos early, before its official starting time, must be careful to avoid lighting Shabbos candles before *plag ha-minchah* (in Brooklyn, 3:37 pm). Regardless of when they accept Shabbos, they must continue fasting until nightfall (*tzeis ha-kochavim*; in Brooklyn, 5:05 pm). At that point, they must recite *Shema* (since the obligation of the nighttime *Shema* has begun), and only then recite *kiddush* and eat.

Candle lighting is at **4:16** pm.

The fast ends at **5:05** pm.

SHABBOS PARSHAS VAYIGASH, 11 TEVES

The fast must be continued until nightfall (*tzeis ha-kochavim*).

We make a point of reciting *Kabbalas Shabbos* and *Maariv* as soon as the appropriate time arrives, without delaying it further. There should be sufficient time to conclude and recite *kiddush* before the seventh hour (which in Brooklyn is 5:56–6:56 pm).

It is important to avoid tasting anything before *kiddush*.

Those for whom, for whatever reason, it is impossible to wait until after *Maariv* to break their fast may recite *kiddush* immediately after nightfall (*tzeis ha-kochavim*), before praying *Maariv*. In such a case, they may not eat more than the amount of a *kebeitzah* of *mezonos* before praying *Maariv*. Alternatively, they may arrange for someone to remind them later of their obligation to recite *kri'as shema* and pray *Maariv*.

Those who do not wish to drink wine tonight should either compel themselves to drink it nonetheless for the sake of

kiddush, or listen to someone else reciting *kiddush* and fulfill their obligation that way. But they should not recite the nighttime *kiddush* over bread (*challah*), nor should they use an alternative beverage to wine.

If the above options are not possible—for example, if a woman cannot wait for her husband’s return from *shul* to break her fast but cannot drink the wine herself—and if grape juice is also not a possible alternative, they should recite *kiddush* over bread and not employ an alternative beverage to wine or grape juice.

Someone who desires to drink water immediately following *kiddush*, before washing for *challah*, must be careful to drink less than a *revi*’s of water.

Daytime Torah reading: 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*’.⁹⁰ (According to alternative custom, this is the end of the fourth portion.)⁹¹” The significance of this is explained there at length, and this is indeed the practice in 770.

MOTZOEI SHABBOS, EVE OF 12 TEVES

Shabbos ends at 5:21 pm.

Following Maariv, anyone who has not recited *kiddush levanah* this month should do so tonight while wearing fine clothes (or while still dressed in his Shabbos clothes).

FRIDAY, TEVES 17

Regarding the beginning of the secular year, see the *yechidus* to Mr. Peter Kalms in *Guidance from the Rebbe*.

SHABBOS PARSHAS VAYECHI, 18 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*.

90) 45:27

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

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.

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.

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."

MOTZOEI SHABBOS, EVE OF 19 TEVES

"... 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!"⁹²

SUNDAY, 19 TEVES (DIDAN NOTZACH)

During these weeks (from when we begin reading the book of *Shemos*), the order of fasting, praying, and extra stringencies known as *shovavim* begins. In leap years, these stringencies are extended and are referred to as *shovavim tat*. To view this practice in the light of Chabad Chassidus, see *Sefer Hasichos* 5749 and other sources.⁹³

92) *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayechi* 5752

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