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DAY-TO-DAY HALACHIC GUIDE

Laws & Customs for
Chanukah 5784

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

FROM THE BADATZ OF CROWN HEIGHTS





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

B"H

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19-20 Kislev, 5 Teves & 10 Teves

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

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FOREWORD

We present a comprehensive guidance with laws and customs associated with Yud-Tes Kislev, the days of Chanukah, Hey Teves and Asarah B'Teves 5784. The details are derived from multiple sources, revised by Rabbi **M. M. Rotenberg**.

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

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

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

* * *

TIME TO PREPARE

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

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

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

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

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:

TO REALIZE REDEMPTION

“Hashem **begs** the Jewish people,” the Rebbe passionately stated, “to occupy themselves with the study of the laws of the sacrificial orders ... which (as our Sages state) is considered as if we had actually offered the sacrifices. This study will bring about the actual offerings because it brings (to quote the Rambam) ‘King Moshiach [who] will build the Beis Hamikdash ... and restore the laws of the Torah ... so that the Jewish people will again offer the sacrifices ... in accordance with all the mitzvos that are stated in the Torah,’ speedily, in our time—literally! Then (to quote the festival liturgy) ‘We will offer before You there the offerings of our obligations ... in accordance with the commandments of Your will.’”¹

“We must experience greater longing and yearning for the Redemption,” the Rebbe demanded. “One of the ways this is accomplished is through studying more Torah on the subjects of the Redemption and the *Beis Hamikdash*. Studying these topics greatly hastens their actual realization, to the extent that we will go directly from studying these subjects to greet our righteous Moshiach. We will inform him, ‘We have just completed studying the laws associated with your coming!’ An additional motivation to study these laws is that we must expect Moshiach’s arrival each and every day. In that case, these laws (concerning the Redemption and the *Beis Hamikdash*) are matters that every Jew—men and women alike—must know in order to put them into practical use on a daily basis, such as many of the laws of the offerings.”²

* * *

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

FRIDAY, 18 KISLEV

TODAY IN HISTORY

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

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

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

singular (*tikaseiv*, not *tikaseivu*) when greeting an individual.

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 4:11 pm.

FRIDAY NIGHT, 19 KISLEV

Chag Hageulah, Rosh Hashanah of Chassidus

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

SHABBOS SPECIAL

Yud-Tes Kislev will coincide with Shabbos in only two calendric setups. The first is as occurs this year: a leap year that carries the *siman* (shorthand for the calendar's setup) of ג"ח (Rosh Hashanah is on Shabbos—*zayin*, the seventh day; the months of Cheshvan and Kislev are both *chaserim—ches*, “lacking,” with only 29 days each; and Rosh Chodesh Nissan is on a Tuesday—*gimmel*, the third day). The other occurrence is a non-leap year that carries the *siman* of ט"ח (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* on 19 Kislev, 5533 (1772). He is buried in Anipoli.

Today is the anniversary of the Alter Rebbe's release from his first imprisonment. He was freed on Tuesday in the week of *Parshas Vayeishev* (as it falls out this year)—toward the evening of 19 Kislev, 5559 (1798) — 225 years ago.

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.

DAY OF FARBRENGEN

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

³ Note that this was when the Rebbe's farbrengen was scheduled. However, in 5737 it was postponed to Sunday night instead.

following year. It is also the day when the annual cycle of the study of the *Tanya*, as ordained by the Previous Rebbe, is begun anew.”

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

Many years, the Rebbe would send public letters and telegrams in honor of Yud-Tes Kislev.

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

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

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

OPENING HAYOM YOM

The introduction to *Hayom Yom* reads as follows:

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

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

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

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

body) will be sincerely motivated by the cause of Heaven, as G-d wishes.

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

PERSONAL FARBRENGENS

On *Parshas Vayishlach* 5752, the Rebbe instructed that “in order to strongly emphasize that every person is also a *mashpia* (person of influence), 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 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*⁴). They should personally attend one *farbrengen* and have representatives attend two others, if all three are held simultaneously.”

Kabbalas Shabbos: In the final stanza of *Lecha Dodi*, the term *besimchah* is recited (and not *berinah*).

Regarding holding *farbrengens* on the night of Shabbos, see references in footnote.⁵

KIDDUSH IN SHUL

If you are making *Kiddush* tonight, whether in shul or at home, the order is as follows: *Sholom aleichem*,⁶ *Aishes chayil*, *Mizmor l'Dovid*, *Doh hi seudasa* and continue on with *Kiddush*.

You must eat immediately after *Kiddush* at the location where it was recited, for *Kiddush* is only halachically binding in the place where a meal will be eaten (*makom seudah*). This entails eating at least a *kezayis*⁷ of a food sourced from one of the 5 *minei dagan*⁸ (*Hamotzi* or *Mezonos*⁹), or by drinking a full *revi'is*¹⁰ of wine

4) three recurrences—a practice that can create a halachically binding circumstance.

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

6) Some say *Sholom Aleichem* only when returning home from shul to eat the full meal there.

7) the volume that can fit into a small matchbox.

8) These five grains are: wheat, barley, spelt, rye, or oats.

9) Although the mitzvah of holding a *seudah* (*Hamotzi* meal) following *Kiddush* entails washing immediately without snacking in between, so that the meal should be eaten with appetite, it is permissible to substitute with *mezonos* to fulfill the obligation of *makom seudah* in circumstances where you will wash for the meal later. This is permissible for these reasons: (1) While eating the *seudah* with appetite is the most ideal way to fulfill the mitzvah, we can rely on the *psak* of those who are more lenient since this is not an absolute requirement; (2) Even absent such a *heter*, it is accepted across the board that *mezonos* (pastries that are sweet and appetizing) do not ruin the appetite but enhance it; also (3) One who is planning on eating a meal at a later time can suffice with a smaller amount immediately post-*Kiddush*; and especially (4) According to the Maharil, in his commentary on the Alter Rebbe's *Shulchan Aruch*, one can possibly fulfill their obligation of *seudas Shabbos* even with *mezonos*.

10) approximately 3 oz. (views on this *shiur* span a minimum quantity of 2.6 to 3.4 oz.)

in addition to what was drunk for *Kiddush*.

In extenuating circumstances, you can rely on more lenient opinions of defining *makom seudah*, and you are *yotzeh* even if you drank just one full *revi'is* of wine for *Kiddush*.

Someone who desires to drink water immediately following *Kiddush*, before washing for *challah* (or eating *mezonos*), must be careful to drink less than a *revi'is* of water.

WOMEN & KIDDUSH

A woman should ideally make *Kiddush* on wine, if at all possible, or listen to someone else reciting *Kiddush* and fulfill their obligation that way. They should not recite the nighttime *kiddush* over *challah*, nor should they use an alternative beverage to wine if making *Kiddush* on their own.

If the above options are not possible and if grape juice is also not a possible alternative, they should recite *Kiddush* over *challah*.

A woman who is at home while her husband is at shul (making or hearing *Kiddush* there), should preferably not wait for him to come home to make *Kiddush*, as being *motzi* her once he himself already fulfilled his obligation can be a halachic issue.¹¹ In circumstances where she is not capable of making *Kiddush* on her own, he is certainly allowed to, and the general practice is that he may do so even if it is merely difficult (practically) for her.

SHABBOS PARSHAS VAYISHLACH, 19 KISLEV

Chag Hageulah, Rosh Hashanah of Chassidus

Shema can be recited until 9:21 am.

TANYA ANEW

We begin the new yearly cycle in the study of the daily Tanya portion of Chitas. This Yud-Tes Kislev, we utilize the cycle division designated for a leap year (*shanah meuberet*).

TEFILLOS

After the Torah reading, The *Haftorah* of *Chazon Ovadya* is read.

Av Harachamim is not recited before Musaf, and *Tzidkascha* is not recited during Minchah.

¹¹) since there is a halachic argument whether one may say kiddush again to exempt others if they are capable of doing so on their own. See Hebrew footnotes for a complete discussion on why it is permissible in extenuating circumstances, with sources.

MOTZOEI SHABBOS, EVE OF 20 KISLEV

Chag Hageulah, Rosh Hashanah of Chassidus

Shabbos ends at 5:14 pm.

Vih no'am and *Ve'atah Kadosh* are recited as usual during Maariv.

The *melave malka* meal is consumed in conjunction with the Chassidic *farbrengen* celebrating the *Chag Hageulah*.

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.

SUNDAY, 20 KISLEV

Chag Hageulah, Rosh Hashanah of Chassidus

Tachanun is not recited today.

The Book of Ezra records that at the start of the era of the Second *Beis Hamikdash*, “on the twentieth day of the ninth month”—Chof Kislev in the year 3414—upon the return to Eretz Yisrael of the Jews who were exiled to Babylon, that “all the people of Yehudah and Binyamin assembled.”¹² At this grand assembly (*farbrengen*), *Ezra Hasofer* inspired the people to return to Hashem through genuine *teshuvah*.

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

The Previous Rebbe revealed in a letter that in the year 5558, the Alter Rebbe instructed the Chassidim to apply themselves diligently to the study of Tanya, and that on the Shabbos that coincides with Chof Kislev, every community of Anash should study two chapters from the first part of Tanya and one chapter from its second part. The Previous Rebbe concludes that this was an enigma (*vayitheh l'peleh*) in the eyes of Chassidim.¹³

MONDAY, 21 KISLEV

TODAY IN HISTORY

It is recorded that in the days of *Shimon Hatzaddik*, Chof-Alef Kislev is the day that Har Gerizim, a stronghold of the Samaritan tribe (who brought many troubles on the Jews of the Second Temple Era), was plowed over. To commemorate this day as one of minor celebration, eulogies were not given. The Rebbe talks about the significance of the differing accounts of the event and its lessons.¹⁴

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

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

14) In *Megillah Taanis* (In the Talmud [Yuma 69a], the date given is 25 Teves). See the *sichah* of *Shabbos*

TUESDAY NIGHT, 23 KISLEV

REQUEST FOR RAIN

Tonight marks sixty days since the onset of the Tishrei *tekufah* (autumn season), and therefore, outside Eretz Yisrael, we begin reciting the winter prayer of *v'sein tal umatar liverachah* during the *Amidah* of Maariv 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 umatar*.

There are a number of laws that apply in case *v'sein tal umatar* (or even just the word *umatar*) was not said, as laid out in the chart at the end of the booklet.

CHANUKAH PREPARATIONS

WHAT TYPE OF FUEL?

Pure oil is best for lighting the menorah, over candles. Kindle all lights with one type of fuel. (For example, do not light some oil cups and some beeswax candles in a single menorah.) The mitzvah **cannot** be fulfilled with wickless candles, gas canisters or electric lights.¹⁵

The menorah may not be lit with oil that is repulsive or causes a foul smell, or with oil that is spiritually repellent due to its having been acquired through theft.¹⁶ It is also best to use oil that has not been stored under a bed where people have slept, or in a bathroom.

Parshas Vayeishev, 21 Kislev, 5745 (Hisva'aduyos p. 905 ff.)

15) In extenuating circumstances (such as in a hospital or in flight) where it is not possible to kindle an open flame, an electric candelabra should be lit without a brachah. The candelabra should be one that is designated for Chanukah (not used year-round for general illumination, e.g., the reading lights above your airplane seat) and its sockets should be filled with incandescent bulbs that have metal filaments. Do not hold the electric menorah when switching it on, but place it on a surface in front of you.

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

Some authorities maintain that the materials used for the menorah must be the absolute property of its owner. (See extensive references and notes in the Hebrew version of this publication.) According to this view, borrowing such materials is not an option. Thus, the buyer needs to physically lift the materials or draw them toward himself to fully acquire them according to the halachic principle of *kinyan* (or pay for the oil which also qualifies as a *kinyan* when required for the proper fulfillment of a mitzvah). Accordingly, if a sleeper guest wishes to fulfill the menorah obligation with the host's lighting, they must give 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.

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

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

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

Other *hiddurim* (enhancements) relating to the olive oil include using a product that is extra virgin (and not labeled “pomace,” which includes pulp), food-grade (although be aware that oil of this caliber may be marked “for lighting” so as not to be subjected to a food tax) and liquid (not congealed or frozen). This is because the purer and more virgin the product, the better it is for the mitzvah.¹⁷

Candles: For those purchasing the small cardboard boxes of ubiquitous, colored-wax Chanukah candles, be aware that these candles are designed to burn exactly the minimum half-hour required by Halachah. Since many cheap *menoros* are fashioned with candle slots that are close together, these candles can burn out in even less than thirty minutes on Night Two and on as the heat of nearby flames melt the wax at a faster rate. Imperfections in the production process can cause them to go out before the half hour is up even on the first night. As we will discuss further in the halachos of lighting, we are generally stringent to set the Chanukah lights to burn a full fifty minutes, so buy longer candles to fulfill the mitzvah in a manner of *hiddur*. When purchasing for small children, or for *mitvzoim* purposes in cases where the menorah will definitely be lit after nightfall, you may be lenient with the minimal-sized candles (since it can be projected that at least one flame will remain lit for the obligatory half-hour). However, when the candles will be lit before dark, and especially on *erev Shabbos* when they **must** be kindled by *shki'ah* time, provide longer candles that will burn until at least a full half-hour after *shki'ah*.

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

¹⁷ 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*.

WHAT ABOUT THE WICKS?

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

Wood wicks should not be used.

AND THE RECEPTACLE?

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

If no receptacle is used, or if candles are held by shallow cups or spikes, care must be taken that they are not close enough for individual lights to meld, or even look like they have become a single flame. The space that Halachah requires between candles in this setup is an *etz bah* (finger’s breadth) between each light. However, in a standard menorah with all candles in a row, and especially those with metal or glass oil cups for individual lights, this is not a concern.¹⁸

A menorah that has branches of uneven heights is still kosher,¹⁹ though one that is aligned is more *mehudar* and should be used, as it is our practice on Chanukah to perform the mitzvah *mehadrin min hamehadrin*, in the most ideal way.

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?”²⁰

WHO LIGHTS?

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

18) see www.asktherav.com #11797

19) see www.asktherav.com #2107, with illustration.

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

praise G-d and thank Him for the miracles that He performed for us.”

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

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

TRAVEL PLANS

While it seems logical that someone who does not have a home is not obligated to purchase or rent a home for the sake of observing this mitzvah,²¹ nevertheless, it is equally obvious that due to the preciousness of the mitzvah, we should not cause it to be neglected deliberately. Therefore, **if you intend to travel, organize your schedule in advance so that you will be able to personally light the menorah at its proper time in your own living quarters.** It is a far greater mitzvah to personally light the menorah rather than delegate it to an emissary.

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

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

As mentioned above in the footnote regarding not using borrowed oil, a houseguest should contribute to the cost of the host’s lighting—thereby being *yotzeh* with the menorah lit in the location where they are currently sleeping.

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

SCHEDULING PARTIES

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

THE DREIDEL

On the eve of Ches Teves 5747, the Rebbe stated, “As is known, the word *goshnah* (lit., to Goshen) in the phrase ‘He sent Yehudah ahead of him, to Yosef, to direct him to Goshen’²² 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’).²³

THURSDAY, 24 KISLEV

Erev Chanukah

TODAY IN HISTORY

“On the twenty-fourth of the ninth month Hashem’s words were delivered through the prophet Chagai.” This message foretold victory over the enemies of *Bnei Yisrael*, when Zerubavel (who was of the Davidic line) would succeed in continuing the building of the second *Beis Hamikdash* that had started, but was then stayed, during the days of King Koresh. The significance of the date of this *nevuah* is that it was able to provide a spiritual antidote to a less positive outcome that resulted from the Chanukah victory years later on that date—the *Chashmonaim* ushered in a new era of Jewish sovereignty that was, unfortunately, not from the tribe of Yehudah. This day is significant too, says the Rebbe,²⁴ to the concept of redemption as it applies to the third *Beis Hamikdash*, and the reestablishment of a king from *Dovid Hamelech* (Moshiach), which will be forever, speedily in our days.

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

During Minchah, *Tachanun* is not recited.

22) Bereishis 46:28

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

24) see *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Chayei Sarah*, 5712; *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayeishev* 5736

MENORAH LIGHTING TIMES FOR CROWN HEIGHTS

The earliest possible time to light is *plag haminchah* (lit., half of Minchah) for public lightings (and for individuals in extenuating circumstances).

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

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

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

**THURSDAY, 24 KISLEV
(DECEMBER 7), 1ST NIGHT**
Plag Haminchah - 3:30 pm
Shki'ah - 4:29 pm
Chatzos - 11:47 pm

**FRIDAY, 25 KISLEV
(DECEMBER 8), 2ND NIGHT**
Plag Haminchah - 3:30 pm
Shabbos Candles - 4:10 pm
(18 minutes before shki'ah)

**MOTZOEI SHABBOS,
EVE OF 27 KISLEV
(DECEMBER 9), 3RD NIGHT**
Shabbos Ends - 5:14 pm
Chatzos - 11:48 pm

**SUNDAY, 27 KISLEV
(DECEMBER 10), 4TH NIGHT**
Plag Haminchah - 3:31 pm
Shki'ah - 4:29 pm
Chatzos - 11:48 pm

**MONDAY, 28 KISLEV
(DECEMBER 11), 5TH NIGHT**
Plag Haminchah - 3:31 pm
Shki'ah - 4:29 pm
Chatzos - 11:49 pm

**TUESDAY, 29 KISLEV
(DECEMBER 12), 6TH NIGHT**
Plag Haminchah - 3:31 pm
Shki'ah - 4:29 pm
Chatzos - 11:49 pm

**WEDNESDAY 1 TEVES
(DECEMBER 13), 7TH NIGHT**
Plag Haminchah - 3:31 pm
Shki'ah - 4:29 pm
Chatzos - 11:50 pm

**THURSDAY, 2 TEVES
(DECEMBER 14), 8TH NIGHT**
Plag Haminchah - 3:32 pm
Shki'ah - 4:30 pm
Chatzos - 11:50 pm

LIGHTING IN SHUL

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

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

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

WHERE TO LIGHT

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.

WHEN TO LIGHT

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

It is the Chabad custom to light the shul menorah towards the conclusion of Minchah before reciting *Aleinu*. There is no need to wait until *shki'ah* (sunset); it can be kindled any time after *plag haminchah*. The *chazzan* recites three blessings on the first night, including *Shehechianu*.²⁵ On the remaining nights, two blessings are said.

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

HOW TO LIGHT

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

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

²⁵) A mourner should not light the shul menorah on the first night of Chanukah for this reason.

LAW OF REDEMPTION: WHO WILL LIGHT?

At a general *yechidus* on the 3rd night of Chanukah 5751, the Rebbe asked: “Who will light the grand Chanukah menorah in the third *Beis Hamikdash*? Surely we will light it there, as was done at the time of the miracle (as we recite in the *V'al hanissim* prayer): “And they lit the menorah in Your Holy Courtyard.” The subject needs an in-depth analysis, but it is very probable that it will be *Aharon Hakohen* himself who will kindle the public menorah! Since he is already the one designated to light the seven-branched gold menorah daily, which is done immediately prior to the opportune time of public Chanukah lightings, the law the precedence will apply to him.

THURSDAY NIGHT, 1ST NIGHT OF CHANUKAH

LIGHTING ON TIME

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

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

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

The Rebbe strongly emphasized the importance of lighting the menorah ourselves in its proper time, before *tzeis hakochavim*, and also with regard to inspiring others while doing *mitvza Chanukah*—encouraging and facilitating the lighting of a menorah on time by as many Jews as possible.²⁶

²⁶ Below is an excerpt from *Sichas Motzoei Shabbos Vayeishev, Ohr L'chof Kislev, 5739* (taken from a recording of the Rebbe's address). See the original *sichah* for the full message.

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

PRE-LIGHTING ACTIVITY

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

It is forbidden to begin a *melachah* (time-consuming work) or a meal within a half hour of the proper kindling time. Snacking is permitted, if necessary, in an amount less than the meal-appropriate size (up to the volume of *kebeitzah*, the amount that fits into two small matchboxes) of *hamotzi* or *mezonos*—or on fruit and other non-*mezonos* foods, even in larger quantities. Nevertheless, those who are extra scrupulous avoid snacking as well.²⁷

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

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

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

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

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

HOW LATE?

If you did not light the menorah at the appropriate time, you may do so later, provided that there is still pedestrian traffic outside, established as a half hour after the appropriate time. If this time has elapsed, you must at least attempt to light the menorah before halachic midnight. If this is not an option, you may

²⁷) See Hebrew entry for references.

light the menorah during the night, any time before dawn, provided that other members of the household are awake to observe the lighting. If they are asleep, it is worth rousing at least two individuals—if not, one will do—so that you can recite the blessings. If they are asleep, and rousing them is not an option, you may light the menorah without the blessings.

However, someone who lives alone or has no household with him where he is staying, should light **with** a blessing, even when it's late.

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 a good idea to verbalize, before lighting the menorah, that you only wish to utilize the amount of fuel necessary for the mitzvah (whether it is a half hour or 50 minutes). This way, lights still burning and oil left over after that time—and even the wicks—will not be considered a mitzvah item that would need special care and disposal.²⁸

MENORAH PLACEMENT

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

LAW OF REDEMPTION: WE'LL LIGHT WHERE?

In the Era of Moshiach, we will once again kindle our *menoros* outside, in view of all passersby.²⁹

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.

²⁸) see www.asktherav.com #18187

²⁹) see *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Mikeitz*, 5723

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

It is the Chabad custom to position the menorah within the actual space of the doorway, alongside the width of its doorpost, and to place it on a somewhat lower object such as chair, without concern for the direction of the branches—whether they stretch from east to west or north to south.

HOW HIGH?

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

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

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

THE SHAMASH

The *shamash* should be placed higher than the other lights.

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

30) See details and sources on www.asktherav.com #6445; www.halacha2go.com 467

CHILDREN LIGHTING

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

LIGHTING FOR CHINUCH

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

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

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

WOMEN LIGHTING

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

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

The Rebbe states: “The (Friediker) Rebbe related that when his father, the Rebbe (Rasha), had to leave home before Chanukah, he instructed his wife, Rebbetzin Shterna Sarah, to personally light her own menorah, although she would listen to the blessings recited by one of the men.”³³

31) *Sefer Hasichos* 5748, p. 162.

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

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

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. They can all chip in to purchase the oil, or use supplies that belong to the school.

LIGHTING INSTRUCTIONS

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

LIGHT AT HOME

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

Someone who erred in lighting in another’s home where he is not sleeping over must light again when he returns home that night. (If this happened on the first night, he does not repeat *Shehechianu* the next night.)³⁵

An individual who sees lit Chanukah candles and—for whatever reason—is not planning on lighting that night at all, nor will they be *yotzeh* with another lighting, should recite the brachah *she’asah nissim*. If it is the first night seeing the lights, they should recite *Shehechianu* as well. This applies as long as candles are burning, even if it is more than a half hour after they were lit, and also for someone who merely sees the candles in shul. However, if someone in their household did light the menorah while they were not present, there is an argument among *poskim* whether to recite the brachah—and in the case of a disputed brachah, we refrain from reciting it (*safek brachos lehakeh*).

A person who is in a non-Jewish area with no menorah in sight, should light

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

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

³⁵) See [#25274](http://www.asktherav.com)

candles with a brachah even if there is a designated person at home who will be lighting that night, for there is an obligation to actually view the lights of Chanukah.

GATHER THE FAMILY

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.

FIRST NIGHT'S LIGHT

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

LAW OF REDEMPTION: HILLEL & SHAMAI

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

The Rebbe says: “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.”³⁶

According to the Rebbe's explanation in the *sichah* of *Simchas Torah* 5752, in the initial stage of the Redemption, the law will follow the view of *Beis Shamai*, whereas in the advanced stage of Redemption, the law will follow both *Beis Hillel* as well as *Beis Shamai*. At that time, the physical world will be the recipient of the revelation of *Atzmus*, Hashem's Essence. He is able to tolerate impossibilities, and He considers opposing views of our Sages as equally valid Divine disclosures. The impossibility of following both views will then become possible, and that will become the practical law.³⁷

³⁶ *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.”

³⁷ Note that according to one version of our Sages' teaching, “All the festivals will be nullified in the future era, except for Chanukah and Purim,” as quoted in *Igeres HaTi'ul*, *Derush Ois Mem*, and in *Sefer Hachaim* (vol. 3, beginning of ch. 7)—also see *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 5, p. 172, fn. 4. See *Ateres Zekeinim* (676), that the term used in the blessing over the *menorah* – *lehadlik*, “to kindle,” refers to the kindling of the Chanukah lights in the Future Era. On the other hand, *Maggid Meisharim Parshas Vayakhel*, seems to imply that in the Future Era only the verbal recounting of the miracle will be observed. See *Ben Ish Chai* (vol. 2, *Derush Alef Leshabbos Shuvah*). It is also necessary to clarify the concept of lighting candles at night in the Future Era. According to *Shemos Rabbah* (ch. 18, 11), “In the future era, night will become day, as it is stated, ‘The light of the moon shall be as the light of the

THE BLESSINGS

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

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

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

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

If you forget to recite *Shehechyanu* on the first night, or make another mistake in reciting the brachos, see the chart at the end of the booklet.

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

POST-LIGHTING

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

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.³⁸

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

³⁸ Note the statement in *Sha'alos Uteshuvas Be'er Moshe* (vol. 8, 17).

³⁸) Some are stringent not to extinguish the candles at all.

It is forbidden to make use of the illumination provided by the Chanukah lights.³⁹ 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.⁴⁰

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.

DOING CHORES

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.⁴¹

MAARIV

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

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

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

MIVTZA CHANUKAH

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

39) 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.

40) The severity of this precaution can be ameliorated if, at the time of lighting, the oil and wicks were designated for mitzvah-use only for the necessary amount of time, as mentioned above.

41) *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).

participants to light their own *menoros* at home. It is best to clearly announce that no one fulfills their obligation with a public lighting—they must also light at home.

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

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

When visiting people at home to encourage Chanukah observance, be aware that many modern households have their young children say the brachos, even if an adult actually lights the menorah—so a lit menorah in the household, or the assurance that they have done so, is not an indication that the mitzvah has been fulfilled. In such a case, the menorah would need to be lit again by an adult, so ask leading but non-invasive questions and ascertain if a child did indeed say the brachos on lighting, and if so, how old they are, and whether the adults present had the intention of being *yotzeh*. Then proceed as follows: (1) If there is an adult who was not *yotzeh* in the initial lighting, they should light again with *brachos* with the intention of being *motzi* everyone. (2) If they were all present at the initial lighting, and a child who has not reached the age of *chinuch*⁴² recited the blessings, an adult repeats the brachos and rekindles the menorah. (3) If they were all present and an older child recited the brachos earlier, the adult lights the menorah again, but without the brachos.⁴³

CHANUKAH CUSTOMS

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

In numerous *sichos*, the Rebbe discusses the requirement to rejoice on Chanukah. Despite the halachic dispute as to whether rejoicing is actually required or not,

42) The age of *chinuch* is around six years, but can be somewhat younger for an intelligent child.

43) This is because there is a halachic argument whether a child who understands the point of the lighting can be *motzi* the adults, and *safek brachos lehakel*. This principle would also apply to the brachah of *Shehecheyanu* recited by the older child on the first night—it is not repeated later that evening if an adult lights, nor is it said if they become aware that they must light for themselves on a subsequent night.

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.

We serve foods that are prepared with oil in order to recall the miracle of the oil. In *Sefer Hasichos* 5752,⁴⁴ the Rebbe explains this custom at length.

LATKES & DONUTS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Commercially fried doughnuts that are generally cooked in vegetable oil or the

⁴⁴) p. 196

like, do not need hand-washing.⁴⁵ However, all doughnuts must be *bishul Yisroel* (cooked, even in a commercial setting, with the participation of a Shabbos-observant Jew).⁴⁶

V'AL HANISSIM

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

GELT & MORE

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

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

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

SHARE & FARBRENG

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

“In addition to all of our other activities, including *mitvza Chanukah*, we should hold *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, *bayamim haheim bizman hazeh*, ‘In those days [of yore as well as] **in the current era.**’⁴⁷

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

46) See [#18021](http://www.asktherav.com) for references.

47) *Sefer Hasichos*

FRIDAY, 25 KISLEV, 1ST DAY OF CHANUKAH

SHACHARIS

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

In 5750, the Rebbe instructed, “To further increase the impact of the Chanukah lights, it is appropriate to keep the menorah that is lit in shul (where everyone gathers) burning around the clock, provided that there is no concern of children playing with fire.”

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

RECITING HALLEL

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

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

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

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

The best way to fulfill the mitzvah of reciting *Hallel* is to recite it together with the congregation, immediately after the *Amidah* of Shacharis. That way, *Hodu* and *Ana* can be recited in response to the *chazzan*.

In *Igros Kodesh*, the Rebbe mentions the case of someone who enters shul in order to begin Shacharis and discovers that the congregation already recited the *Amidah* and is poised to begin *Hallel*. The Rebbe states, “I never heard an explicit directive regarding reciting *Hallel* before one has recited Shacharis. According to oral tradition among the *Chassidim*, however, despite the fact that our Rebbeim would extend their *Shabbos* prayers over many hours—long after the congregation had concluded the service—they would nevertheless organize their time on Yom Tov so that they would conclude the *Amidah* with the congregation and then recite *Hallel* together with them.”

If you did not recite *Hallel* after the *Amidah*, you may recite it anytime during the day prior to *tzeis hakochavim* (nightfall).

If you omit any word from *Hallel*, you are required to repeat it from the very beginning, according to a minority of halachic opinions. You should do so, but

without another brachah. However, if you omit *Lo lanu* and/or *Ahavti* (having prayed as if it were Rosh Chodesh or the latter days of Pesach), you must repeat *Hallel* from the beginning. If you already completed the half-*Hallel*, repeat the whole *Hallel*, including both the first and last brachos.⁴⁸

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

FASTING, EULOGIES, GRAVESITES

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

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

LAW OF REDEMPTION: THE CHANUKAH MEGILLAH

The following statement is recorded in *Sha'alos Uteshuvos Tzafnas Panei'ach Hachadashos*⁴⁹: "...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 Jews. Although they personally recorded the events), it was not given over to be written (for public use), as explained on the first daf of Yoma 29. G-d willing, in the Future Era, soon, the prophets will be revealed to us and this megillah will be revealed to us!"⁵⁰

EREV SHABBOS CUSTOMS

Today, we recite *shnayim mikra* of *Parshas Vayeishev*.

In today's reading of *shnayim mikra v'echad targum*,⁵¹ the custom is to say all *Haftoros* relevant to Shabbos. In accordance with the custom of the Chabad Rebbeim, the *Haftorah* of *Vayeishev* is read after completing *shnayim mikra* on *erev Shabbos*, while the Torah portion from *shevi'i* until the conclusion is read once again (in the same manner of *shnayim mikra v'echad targum*) on Shabbos 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

48) See details and sources at [#25250](http://www.asktherav.com)

49) vol. 1, 45

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

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

menorah. If there is no early *minyán* available, you should first light the menorah and then join the regular *minyán* for Minchah. The shul menorah is lit after Minchah —anytime after *plag haminchah* (3:30 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.

SECOND NIGHT LIGHTS

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

Nevertheless, in a *sichah* of Shabbos *Parshas Vayeishev* 5716, the Rebbe states that the Friediker Rebbe reused his wicks and he derives a lesson from this.⁵²

The third blessing of *Shehechyanu* 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 *Shehechyanu* whenever he first lights a menorah. (This scenario typically occurs when introducing a Jew to Chanukah on *mitzvot*.)

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

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

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

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

THE SHABBOS MENORAH

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

If you realize after kindling the menorah that there is not sufficient oil,

⁵² See also *Kuntres Bakodesh Penimah*, p. 24.

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

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

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

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

We do not give *Chanukah gelt* on Shabbos; not even using a permissible (non-*muktzah*) object.⁵³ *Chanukah gelt* for Shabbos should be given Friday or Sunday.⁵⁴

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

Candle lighting at 4:10 pm.

FRIDAY NIGHT, 2ND NIGHT OF CHANUKAH

TODAY IN HISTORY

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.

DAVENING & BENTCHING

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

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

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

Val hanissim is added to *Birchas Hamazon*, as well as *Retzei* and *Harachaman* for Shabbos. If you forgot the above, see the chart at the end of the booklet.

MENORAH CARE

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

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

However, if you placed a challah—or another object that is worth more than the flames of the menorah—on the tray before the onset of Shabbos, the tray (and what is underneath it) are no longer solely supporting a *muktzah* object, and once the flames have gone out, the tray—even if the menorah remains on top—may be moved directly on Shabbos.⁵⁵

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

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

CHANUKAH MELACHOS

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

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

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

⁵⁵ There is an opinion that the *heter* of placing a permissible object does not apply to the menorah during Chanukah. Without getting into myriad details, be aware of this stringency and if possible, utilize a non-Jew or indirect handling if needed, *l'chatchilah*.

borer—selecting the scraps from the (desired) edibles.

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

Haneiros Halalu is not sung during Shabbos.⁵⁶

SHABBOS PARSHAS VAYEISHEV, 26 KISLEV, 2ND DAY OF CHANUKAH

Shabbos Mevorchim Teves

TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is the anniversary of the *bris* of the Rebbe Rashab, in the year 5621 (the Hebrew numerals of which spell כתר"א—*kisra*, “crown,” a fact that the Tzemach Tzedek associated with the birth of the Rebbe Rashab).⁵⁷

Early Shabbos morning, the entire book of Tehillim⁵⁸ is read.

SHACHARIS

Add *V'al hanissim* in Shacharis. If you forgot, see the chart at the end of the booklet.

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

KRIAS HATORAH

Two *sifrei Torah* are used today.

Parshas Vayeishev is read from the first Torah, after which the second *sefer Torah* is placed on the *bimah* alongside the first. We may not remove the first *sefer Torah* until the second *sefer Torah* is placed on the *bimah*, so that the *bimah* should not be vacant from a mitzvah. *Chatzi-Kaddish* is recited, and *hagbah* (lifting the Torah) and *gelilah* (wrapping the Torah) are performed on the first Torah.

Maftir is read from the second *sefer Torah*. It speaks about the offerings of the *nassi* to the tribe of Yissachar (*Bayom hasheini*). The Second Torah is then raised and wrapped.

The *Haftorah* begins *Rani vesimchi* and describes the lights of the golden menorah as seen by Zechariah.

After the reading of the Torah, the blessing over the coming month of Teves is

⁵⁶ *Shabbos Chanukah* 5742. Nevertheless, it is customary to sing its final section independently—*Al nisecha v'al nifl'osecha..lehodos ulehallel* etc. Indeed, the Rebbe encouraged that this part be sung on numerous such occasions.

⁵⁷ 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.

⁵⁸ How can I say *Hallel* with a brachah later if I already said it in Tehillim this morning? See the Hebrew footnotes for the reasons this is not a concern.

recited. This month, the *molad* will occur on Tuesday night, at 8:01 pm, and 3/18 of a minute.

Rosh Chodesh Teves will be on Wednesday.

Musaf & Minchah: *Av Harachamim* is not recited before Musaf, nor is *Tzidkasecha* recited during Minchah.

SHABBOS AFTERNOON

Today is a day to *farbreng*.

As mentioned earlier, we may not eat a meal before lighting the menorah once the time has arrived for doing so. If someone began eating earlier, when it was permissible (they washed hands for bread before sunset), they are not required to end the Shabbos meal in order to light the menorah (especially since the menorah lighting is *mid'rabanan*). Nevertheless, it would be prudent to plan ahead to avoid delaying this mitzvah, especially when attending a *farbrengen* which often involves drinking alcoholic beverages. In Chassidic communities, they follow their standard practice of extending the *seudah shlishis* beyond the official conclusion of Shabbos, as is done usually. In fact, this exact scenario occurred at the Rebbe's *farbrengen*.⁵⁹

MOTZOEI SHABBOS, 27 KISLEV, 3RD NIGHT OF CHANUKAH

Shabbos ends at 5:14 pm.

MAARIV

Maariv should not be delayed more than usual tonight.

Recite *Ata chonantanu* and *V'al hanissim* 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 hamavdil bein kodesh lechol* before kindling the menorah.

MENORAH LIGHTING

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

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.

⁵⁹) *Shabbos Chanukah-Parshas Mikeitz* 5744

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

MEALS & GELT

Partake of a Melava Malka meal, as on every *motzoei Shabbos*, enhanced by extra celebration for Chanukah.

In *Birchas Hamazon*, *V'al Hanissim* is recited.

There are some people here who are careful to avoid dealing with money on *motzoei Shabbos*.⁶⁰ In a *yechidus kelalis* in 5748, the Rebbe explains that this concern should not apply to *Chanukah gelt* because it is associated with a mitzvah and is used as a tool to advance children's education. The Rebbe noted that it could be discussed on *motzoei Shabbos* that money be spent only the following morning.⁶¹ The following year, the Rebbe took an alternative approach and concluded that it is appropriate to refrain from actually giving the *gelt* on *motzoei Shabbos*.⁶²

SUNDAY, 27 KISLEV, 3RD DAY OF CHANUKAH

TODAY IN HISTORY

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

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

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

MONDAY, 28 KISLEV, 4TH DAY OF CHANUKAH

On this date, King Yehoyakim burned the original *Megillas Eichah* that *Yirmiyahu Hanavi* had dictated to his disciple, the prophet Baruch, foretelling the destruction of the *Beis Hamikdash*.⁶³

MONDAY NIGHT, 5TH NIGHT OF CHANUKAH

It is customary among Chassidim to celebrate the fifth night of Chanukah,

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

61) 24 Kislev, 5748

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

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

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.

CHANUKAH GELT

WHEN TO GIVE

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.

HOW TO GIVE

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

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

WHO SHOULD GIVE

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

WHAT TO GIVE

The Rebbe often mentions giving coins or bills as *Chanukah gelt*.⁶⁴ However, there is a superiority in giving coins rather than bills from a halachic perspective, as the Rebbe explained during a Tzivos Hashem rally.⁶⁵

GIVE & GET

Every child should try to personally light the Chanukah lights, and in the optimum

64) For example, see the second *sichah* of *Yom Daled D'chanukah* 5750 – addressed to Tzivos Hashem.

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

way—adding a light each night, climaxing with a full set of eight lights on the final night. Each child should also observe the custom of **giving Chanukah gelt**—to a friend, brother, sister, or relative. In addition, each child should increase in Torah learning during the days of Chanukah—studying the laws, history, etc., of Chanukah, and also in general Torah study.⁶⁶

“*Chanukah gelt* is primarily for children, as we have mentioned on many occasions. At the same time, the (Friediker) Rebbe told us that it was widely known that as early as the times of the Tzemach Tzedek, Chassidim were well aware that it is customary to give *Chanukah gelt* to grown children and that this is done even after their marriages. The details of this practice were (purposefully) recorded and published.”⁶⁷

“The (Friediker) Rebbe **personally** gave his daughters *Chanukah gelt*, and continued even after their marriages.”⁶⁸

Teacher Appreciation: It has become customary in many communities for school children to deliver *Chanukah gelt* and other gifts to the teachers who teach them Torah.⁶⁹

TUESDAY, 29 KISLEV. 5TH DAY OF CHANUKAH

Erev Rosh Chodesh

TODAY IN HISTORY

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.⁷⁰

TUESDAY NIGHT, EVE OF 1 TEVES, 6TH 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**, see the chart at the end of the booklet.

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

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

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

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

69) Regarding the use of *maaser* money as *Chanukah gelt* for Torah teachers, see www.asktherav.com #1981.

70) vol. 15, p. 545

WEDNESDAY, 1 TEVES, 6TH DAY OF CHANUKAH

Rosh Chodesh Teves

SHACHARIS

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

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

KRIAS HATORAH

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

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

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

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

LAW OF REDEMPTION: EVERY ROSH CHODESH

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

We will all ascend to the *Beis Hamikdash* in Yerushalayim—not just three times a year, for Pesach, Shavuot and Sukkos, but also for each Shabbos and for each Rosh Chodesh (as it says in Navi⁷¹).

ROSH CHODESH OBSERVANCES

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

LAW OF REDEMPTION: WOOD ENDOWMENT

Specific families merited to donate wood annually for use on the altar, as described in *Ta'anis* 4:5. On the first of Teves, the family of Parosh donated wood. They actually had an earlier date in the year as well, on the fifth of Menachem-Av.⁷²

71) Yeshayah 10:23

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

ROSH CHODESH STUDY

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

IN THE AFTERNOON

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

If you washed for bread later in the day and your meal extended past nightfall, say the Rosh Chodesh additions in *Birchas Hamazon*, even if it goes late into the evening, and even if you light the menorah in the interim. This applies only if you ate a *kezayis*⁷³ of bread before *shki’ah* to obligate you with regard to mentioning the holiday,⁷⁴ and you have not interrupted the meal to say *Krias Shema*⁷⁵ or daven all of Maariv.

THURSDAY NIGHT, 8TH NIGHT OF CHANUKAH

Zos Chanukah

TACTICAL ADVANTAGE

”There is a distinction between all the other days of Chanukah and the last day of Chanukah, *Zos Chanukah*,” the Rebbe says on the evening of Zos Chanukah in 5742.⁷⁶ “On the first days of Chanukah, we conduct the war on the *yetzer hara* in a limited way: on the first night we light one flame of a mitzvah-candle and Torah-light. On the second night, we increase it to two, and so it goes every night—there always remain yet unkindled (potential) lights in the menorah. However, when we come to the last night of Chanukah, called *Zos Chanukah*, we go into full attack mode, a major battle against the *yetzer*. Suddenly, every candle available in the menorah is lit (all eight), and its illumination expands in the most brilliant and widespread fashion. In a person’s own Divine service, this means that a Jew can ‘light up’ all their soul-powers and capabilities to make the world brighter, and even brighter, with their mitzvos (candles) and Torah learning (light).”

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

73) This is the volume of bread that would squeeze into a small matchbox.

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

75) See [#24793](http://www.asktherav.com)

76) *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 20, p.498

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

OIL DISPOSAL

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

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

When throwing out a disposable menorah or cups that were used over Chanukah, do so in a respectful manner—place them in a clean-trash receptacle, or if using a garbage can that contains smelly trash, wrap them well so they are protected from dirt and debris.

FRIDAY, 3 TEVES, 8TH DAY OF CHANUKAH

Zos Chanukah

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

THIS IS IT!

In *Sichos Kodesh*, the Rebbe instructs each person to use this special day, when all eight flames of the menorah shine forth, to bring *mitvza Chanukah* to its climax. The Rebbe urges whoever has not yet observed the custom of giving *Chanukah gelt* to grab the opportunity now, in the final hours and minutes of Chanukah. Failing that, they 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. This is especially so in light of the great *Chassidische nachas* that they receive from their sons and daughters and the *nachas* that they will receive in the future through increasing their Jewish education from this point onwards.

COUNT THIS

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

LEARN THIS

The Rebbe once instructed that the Alter Rebbe's *maamar* that explains the

greatness of Zos Chanukah be studied today.⁷⁷ The main point, the Rebbe explained, is to live with this *maamar*.

THIS BRACHAH

On Zos Chanukah 5713, the Rebbe said, “It is stated in the books of the *Chassidim* of Poland (and although it most likely appears somewhere in *Chabad Chassidus*, I have not yet located such a teaching) that the eighth day of Chanukah—Zos Chanukah—is a day of special blessing for resolving fertility issues.”⁷⁸

On Yud-Tes Kislev 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 in relation to the Rosh Hashanah of Chassidus, *Yud-Tes Kislev*. It is also understood that after the *kesivah* (inscribing) that occurs on *Yud-Tes Kislev*, there follows the concept of *chasimah* (sealing), similar to the *chasimah* of Yom Kippur that comes as a result of the *kesivah* of Rosh Hashanah.

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

“He also mentions that this teaching runs parallel to a teaching recorded in *Poilishe sefarim* (works of other Chassidic streams) that Chanukah marks the *gmar chasimah* (final sealing) of the judgments [of Tishrei]. The Rebbe explained that he quotes the works of *Poilishe sefarim* because in this case, the teaching concurs with the teachings of *Chabad Chassidus*.⁷⁹

See also *Igros Kodesh*: “It was a common teaching in Poland that ... the *gmar chasimah* occurs in the month of Kislev, during Chanukah.”⁸⁰

In a *yoman* of *Zos Chanukah*,⁸¹ it is recorded that after Minchah, the Rebbe indicated that the candles still burning in the 770 should not be extinguished.

Shabbos Candles: Candle lighting is at **4:11 pm**.

AFTER DARK

A meal that began on the last day of Chanukah and extends until nightfall, or even several hours into the night, should have *V'al Hanisim* recited during *Birchas Hamazon* with certain stipulations, as mentioned above, with regard to Rosh Chodesh.

77) see *Likkutei Torah Derushim Leshemini Atzeres*

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

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

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

81) from 2 Teves, 5725. In the *sichah* after Minchah of Zos Chanukah-3 Teves, 5749, the Rebbe mentioned how the eight candles that were lit in shul (the previous night) illuminate the night following Chanukah as well.

This year, since tonight is Shabbos, those who wish to extend their meal beyond sunset (*shki'ah*) may not eat or drink anything at all past sunset without first reciting *Kiddush* for Shabbos. Women (or if circumstances require a man as well) must interrupt their meal even earlier than that to light the Shabbos candles, whereupon they cannot eat further without *Kiddush*.

The method of making *Kiddush* and inaugurating the Shabbos meal while in the midst of a temporarily interrupted Chanukah meal is as follows: Spread a cloth over the *challah* (using two *challos*, for *lechem mishneh*), and then recite *Kiddush* over a cup of wine. The *brachah* of *Hagafen* is recited only if they did not drink wine previously as part of their meal. They must then cut the *challah* and without reciting *Hamotzi*, and eat at least the quantity of a *kezayis* from it. It is best to eat at least another *kezayis* after the time of nightfall (*tzeis hakochavim*) has arrived. When they eventually conclude their meal, they must include both *Al Hanisim* for Chanukah as well as *Retzei* for Shabbos. Following that, they must recite the Shabbos Maariv prayers.

SHABBOS PARSHAS MIKEITZ, 4 TEVES

Chanukah's influence continues today, despite the lack of an official *Isru Chag*.⁸²

LAW OF REDEMPTION: ANOTHER DAY?

Some authorities, such as *Minchas Chinuch*,⁸³ 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

⁸² In *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Mikeitz* 5733, the Rebbe discusses a paradox: On one hand, Halachah does not call for an *isru chag* extension of Chanukah, whereas from a spiritual perspective, *Chazal* state that the Chanukah lights "are never nullified." Indeed, their entire purpose, as explained in *Chassidus*, is to extend and draw their light across the entire coming year.

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

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

⁸³ Mitzvah 301:6

inability of ancient Diaspora communities to obtain real-time updates from the *Beis Din* in Eretz Yisrael.⁸⁴

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: SEASON'S END?

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

This raises the question of the *Bikkurim* season in the Future Era,⁸⁵ when fruit will indeed be found growing in the field even after Chanukah. For “trees will bring forth fruit every day,”⁸⁶ and “the plowman will encounter the reaper” due to the instant and constant growth of produce.⁸⁷

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

Haftorah: This year’s calendar setup is quite unique in that *Parshas Mikeitz* falls after Chanukah, and its designated *Haftorah* is actually recited.

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 5:16 pm.

SUNDAY, 5 TEVES

Didan Notzach

TODAY IN HISTORY

“Behold, it came to pass in the twelfth year, in the tenth [month], on the fifth [day] of the

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

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

86) *Shabbos* 30b

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

month of our exile, that the fugitive from Yerushalayim came to me, saying, ‘The city was struck!’”⁸⁸ Rashbi considered this day on which the news of the tragedy arrived as if it were the day of the event itself.⁸⁹

*Shalsheless Hayachas*⁹⁰ 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*.”

BOOKS, BOOKS & MORE BOOKS

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

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

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

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

SEFARIM SALES

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

REDEEM MORE BOOKS

On *Shabbos Parshas Vayigash* 5752,⁹¹ in connection with Hei Teves, the Rebbe said: “There still remain books and manuscripts of my father-in-law, the (Frierdiker) Rebbe and his father, the Rebbe (Rashab) in captivity in that country (Russia) and

88) Yechezkel 33:21

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

90) included in the introduction to *Hayom Yom*

91) see *Sefer Hasichos* 5752, vol. 1, p. 226 f& *Sichos Kodesh* 5752, p. 407

have still not yet returned to their rightful place, despite their government ordering that they release them.

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

”What can each of us as individuals actually do to quicken the redemption and return of these books and manuscripts? The response is simple: everyone—men, women and children take action paralleling this, by bringing to their home and personal library newly printed holy books (and writings) of Torah words in addition to those already in his possession as part of (the campaign for) a houseful of *sefarim*.⁹²

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*”⁹³ as per Chabad custom.⁹⁴

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).⁹⁵

WEDNESDAY, 8 TEVES

TODAY IN HISTORY

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.”⁹⁶ That day was “as difficult for the Jews as the day on which the Golden Calf was made.”⁹⁷ The Rebbe explains this concept in *Likkutei Sichos* and *Sefer Hasichos* 5752.⁹⁸

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.

92) See further in the *sichah* for additional directives on the matter.

93) 45:27

94) see entry for *Shabbos Parshas Vayigash*

95) 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.

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

97) *Maseches Sofrim*

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

THURSDAY, 9 TEVES

TODAY IN HISTORY

Chazal state that the 9th 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.⁹⁹ It has since been explained that *Ezra Hasofer* passed away on this date. The commentators to *Megillas Ta'anis* describe additional events. The Rebbe's explanation appears in *Sefer Hasichos* 5749.¹⁰⁰

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 10th of Teves.

NIGHT UN-FAST

On the eve of the 10th of Teves 5752, the Rebbe explains that although the 10th 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 10th 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*.

STARTING THE FAST

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

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

FRIDAY, 10 TEVES

Fast of Asarah B'Teves - A day of Rejoicing-to-be.

TODAY IN HISTORY

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

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

¹⁰⁰) *Vayigash*, 9 Teves

“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 hakochavim*). 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.”¹⁰¹

“The *halachah* states that ‘regarding all of these four fasts, 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.”¹⁰²

WHO FASTS

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

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

Dawn, the start of the fast, is at **5:48 am**.

LAW OF REDEMPTION: FROM THE FIRST

All of the fast days (except Yom Kippur) will be canceled in the era of Moshiach. In fact, they will become “*Yomim tovim* and days of feasting and gladness.” This is further discussed in *Likkutei Sichos*, and the Rebbe draws particular relevance to the Fast of the 10th of Teves.¹⁰³

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.”¹⁰⁴

Tzedakah: It is customary to increase *tzedakah* on fast days. According to

101) *Sichas Asarah B'Teves 5749*, in *Sefer Hasichos* p.136.

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

103) *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*.

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

custom, a person should estimate the average cost of their daily meals and donate that amount to *tzedakah* on the eve of the fast.

FASTING

We do not rinse our mouths on a fast day.

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

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

SHACHARIS

In Shacharis (and later, at Minchah), the *chazzan* adds *Aneinu* in the *Amidah*, between the blessings of *go'el Yisrael* and *Refa'einu*.¹⁰⁵ If he omitted *Aneinu*, see the chart at the end of the booklet.

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

When a *chassan* is present for the prayers, or if a *bris* will be held, or the like, the custom practiced in 770¹⁰⁶ is for the congregation to proceed with *Selichos* but to omit *Viduy*, *Tachanun*, and *Avinu Malkeinu* from the prayers.¹⁰⁷

MINCHAH

It is preferable to daven Minchah earlier so that it does not run into *bein hashmoshos* (between sunset and nightfall), finishing before *shki'ah*. In addition to the fact that it is appropriate to daven Minchah before *shki'ah* every day, on a fast day and specifically Erev Shabbos, this is the correct thing to do. In the event

¹⁰⁵ If there are less than a minyan of fasters, see the Hebrew footnote regarding if and how the *chazzan* should recite *Aneinu*.

¹⁰⁶ 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.

¹⁰⁷ There is no interference with the order of the *Selichos* itself; the congregation begins with *Selach lanu*, and also recites the *viduy* part of *Selichos* (*Ashamnu*) as usual. It is only the *Tachanun*, etc., that are recited as part of Shacharis that are skipped on such an occasion—and this concession is sufficient recognition of the *chassan's* presence, or of the *bris* that will take place.

that someone does daven late, he may still conduct *Krias Hatorah* and *Maftir* even once it has reached *bein hashmoshos*.

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

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

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

This is the order for Minchah: *Hodu, Pasach Eliyahu* (this year), *Korbanos*, then *Ashrei* followed by *chatzi-Kaddish*. The reading of the Torah (*Vayechal*) and the *Haftorah* of *Dirshu Hashem* follow. Next, *Yehalelu* followed by *chatzi-Kaddish* and the *Amidah* with the addition of *Aneinu; Kaddish tiskabel. Aleinu* followed by *Kaddish Yasom* and then *Al tira* and *Ach tzadikim*. If an *avel* is present, he recites *Mishnayos* followed by *Kaddish D'rabbanan*.

This year, neither *Tachanun* nor *Avinu Malkeinu* for fast days are recited during Minchah.

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 today, despite it being *erev Shabbos*.¹⁰⁸

Rebuking with Joy?

In 5744, the Rebbe says: “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 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

108) see *Sichas Asarah B'Teves* 5744

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 laHashem*, 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*,¹⁰⁹ 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.”¹¹⁰

LAW OF REDEMPTION: MAFTIR FOR MOSHIACH

“Today may be the day Moshiach arrives,” the Rebbe said on a fast day.¹¹¹ “In that case we won’t be saying the fast-day liturgy in Minchah, but adding happy remarks, for in the middle of the brachah of *Shema Koleinu* we are permitted to add any personal *tefillos*.”

During that same *sichah*, the Rebbe added, “When Moshiach comes today, we will reserve the Minchah *aliyah* for him.”¹¹²

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

EREV SHABBOS PREP

Those who are scrupulous to avoid showering or bathing on a fast day should not

109) ch. 10

110) *Sichas Asarah B'Teves* 5744

111) 18 Tammuz (17 Tammuz *Nidcheh*), 5751

112) And not Shacharis? Perhaps the Rebbe spoke thus because it was Minchah time. And would we still read the Torah at Minchah if we are no longer fasting? See Hebrew footnotes for a comprehensive discussion on these topics.

follow this stringency today; they should 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.

Someone who feels the need may be lenient and brush their teeth just before Shabbos, in honor of Shabbos. Be careful with the angle of your head, so as not to swallow even a small amount of water if gargling.

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

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

Early Shabbos: Those who accept Shabbos early, before its official starting time, must be careful to avoid lighting Shabbos candles before *plag haminchah* (in Brooklyn, **3:35 pm**). Regardless of when they accept Shabbos, they must continue fasting until nightfall (*tzeis hakochavim*, which is **5:03 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 **4:14 pm**.

The fast ends at **5:03 pm**.¹¹³

FRIDAY NIGHT, SHABBOS PARSHAS VAYIGASH, 11 TEVES

The fast must be continued until nightfall (*tzeis hakochavim*).

MAARIV & KIDDUSH

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 (in Brooklyn, this is 5:56–6:56 pm).

Remember 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 hakochavim*). 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 daven Maariv.

¹¹³ There are various methods of calculating the time of nightfall (called *tzeis hakochavim*, when three stars are observable). Following the Alter Rebbe's opinion to account for "smaller stars" we generally wait some minutes after this time to say the nighttime *Shema*. But for the purpose of the fast, you may daven earlier, and then repeat the *Shema* sometime later.

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 *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.

As mentioned in the entry for Shabbos, Chof Kislev, you must eat immediately after *Kiddush* at the location where it was recited, for *Kiddush* is only halachically binding *b'makom seudah*. This entails eating at least a *kezayis* of *Hamotzi* or *Mezonos*,¹¹⁴ or by drinking a full *revi'is* of wine in addition to what was drunk for *Kiddush*. (*B'dieved*, you are *yotzeh* even if you drank just one *revi'is* of wine for *Kiddush*.)

Someone who desires to drink water immediately following *Kiddush*, before washing for *challah* (or eating *mezonos*), must be careful to drink less than a *revi'is* of water.

Krias Hatorah: 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.’¹¹⁵ (According to alternative custom, this is the end of the fourth portion.)”¹¹⁶ 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 5:19 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).

NITTEL NACHT - SUNDAY NIGHT, EVE OF 13 TEVES

The Rebbe notes that *Nittel Nacht* occurs often during or in proximity to the days of Chanukah.¹¹⁷

114) See footnote for Chof Kislev regarding the dispensation to delay the meal and eat *mezonos* now instead.

115) 45:27

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

117) *Sefer Hasichos, Shabbos Parshas Vayeishev* 5750

CUSTOMS FOR NITTUL

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

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

Regarding the deferment of marital relations on *Nittel*, see the footnote.¹¹⁸

WHAT IS NITTEL?

The name *nittel* alludes to an absence, a euphemism for birth. Some suggest it is related to the word *nitleh* and *taluy*, “the hanged one”, a reference to *oso ha'ish*, the individual who is the focus of worship in the *notzri* religion. The date officially marks the birth of that man. As such, the term *nittel* can be related to the Latin *natal*, “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 Kodesh* and *Likkutei Sichos*.¹¹⁹ In other sources, it is explained that the phrase “to avoid adding vitality to *kelipos*” is directed at “that man” who was deified by the non-Jews as well as those who presently follow his path. See the above *Igros Kodesh* to understand how it is possible for Torah study to produce negative results.

WHEN IS NITTEL?

The timing of *Nittel Nacht* does not follow the Jewish dates, but rather, the secular calendar. The date must be determined by the observance of the local non-Jewish population. The Jews of each country observe this custom on the eve of *yom eidam* (lit. the day of their calamity, used as a metonymy for “festival”) as it is celebrated by the non-Jews of their country. In the United States, this sets the date as December 25th. In a location with variances in the dates for the non-Jewish *yom eidam*, *Nittel Nacht* is observed on the date that the majority of the local non-Jews celebrate.¹²⁰

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

THE REBBEIM & NITTEL

Regarding the conduct of the Rebbe Rashab on *Nittel Nacht* and the implied

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

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

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

directive, see *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayeishev* 5750: “From this we derive a directive as well as an infusion of ability to utilize the duration of *Nittel*, not to waste our time, G-d forbid (simply in order to avoid adding vitality to *kelipos*), but rather for a practical benefit. It is especially appropriate to use this time for matters that lead to increased wisdom ... or to increase in acts of *tzedakah* and *chesed*, or to take care of the home, and the like.”¹²¹

In his notes from the winter of 5695, recorded in Vienna, the Rebbe relates that the Rebbe Rashab would also refrain from studying *Chassidus* on *Nittel Nacht*, even in a cursory manner. When *Nittel* coincided with the eve of Shabbos, he would defer the delivering of his customary *maamar* to Shabbos morning instead.¹²²

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

FRIDAY, 17 TEVES

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

Candle lighting is at **4:18 pm**.

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) shouts loudly and joyfully—*Chazak, chazak, venischazeik!* This call symbolizes the strength of the Jewish people in all matters of Torah—with the additional strength of a *chazakah*.

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

FARBRENGEN & HACHLATAH

It is customary for the *gabbaim* to organize a special *farbrenge* on this Shabbos, beyond the ordinary Shabbos *farbrenge*. 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.

¹²¹) Printed in *Sefer Hasichos*. See further in the original *sichah*.

¹²²) 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.

NOT ENOUGH!

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

MOTZOEI SHABBOS, EVE OF 19 TEVES**Didan Notzach**

Shabbos ends at 5:23 pm.

REAL MELAVA MALKA

“... Starting with the festive meal of *motzoei Shabbos* ... ‘The meal of Dovid, King Moshiach’ ... Certainly, then the *melave malka* should be truly magnificent! Moreover, and this is the most crucial point, we should hold the meal with Dovid King Moshiach at our head!”¹²³

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. To view this practice in the light of Chabad Chassidus, see *Sefer Hasichos 5749* and other sources.¹²⁴

In a *yechidus* with Mr. Peter Kalms, the Rebbe spoke about a Jew’s approach to the secular new year (January 1st):

“I give you a *brachah* that you may continue to give your energy, *tzedakah*, help of all kinds to *Yiddishkeit*... Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berdichev was always searching for an occasion to give a *brachah*. Once he did so on the new year of the gentiles. People said to him, ‘How can you, a Rabbi, do this on the special time for the gentiles?’ He said, ‘To make a *brachah*, all occasions are okay’ and now it was also, a day or two ago, the New Year of the gentiles.”¹²⁵

123) *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayechi 5752*

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

125) *Guidance from the Rebbe*

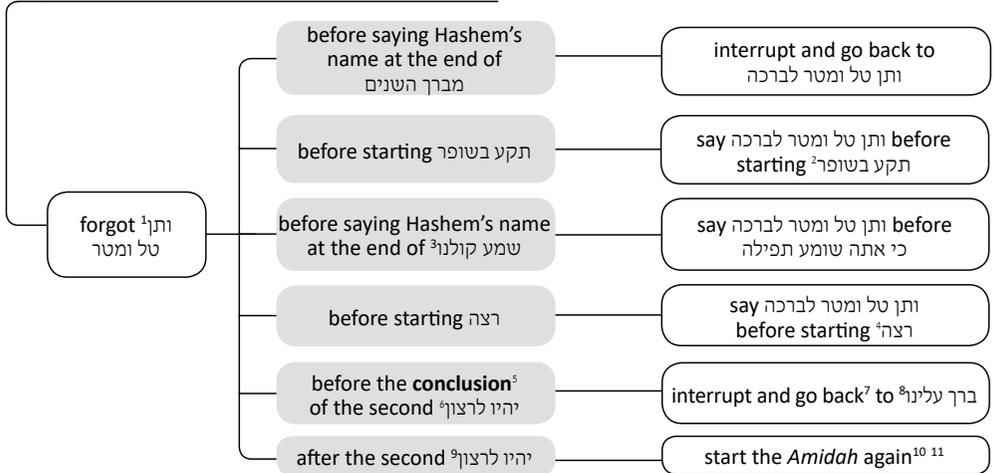
“Oops! I made a mistake...”

What did I do?

When did I remember?

Now I should...

Request for Rain • Winter Season



Notes

1. even if you said לתן טל (omitting the word ומטר).

If you are unsure if you recited the correct version, you must assume that the incorrect version was said out of habit. However, after thirty days have elapsed —this year, beginning with Maariv on the eve of 23 Teves (Jan. 4)—it can be assumed that ותן טל ומטר was indeed recited.

2. If you went back by mistake to the beginning of the Beracha, you are *Yotzeh*.

3. If you made a mistake and went back to עלינו, stop and return to where you were holding. Say ותן טל ומטר.

4. If you went back to the beginning of *Shma Kolenu* or *Bareich Aleinu*, you are *Yotzeh*.

5. Even if he already said Hashem's Name you should Stop and go back to *Bareich Aleinu*

6. If you started אלקי נצור and the Chazzan Reached *Kedusha* you should answer and you can then go back to *Bareich Aleinu*.

7. If you remembered after reciting Hashem's name at the end

of the brachah of הטוב שמך, the טוב שמך or המחזיר שכינתו, הטוב שמך and go back to עלינו. בשלום.

8. If you went back to שמע קולנו and mentioned it there, you are *yotzeh*. If you went back to ברך עלינו and forgot ותן טל ומטר again, say it וחלו.

9. and you have also made the decision not to lengthen the *tefillah* with extra requests and supplications.

10. You must first wait *k'dei hiluch daled amos* (the time it takes to walk six feet) before restarting the *Amidah*.

11. On *matzoei Shabbos*: repeat אתה חוננתנו. On Rosh Chodesh: repeat ויבא. On Chanukah and Purim: ועל הניסים need not be repeated.

If you remembered after the time has come to daven the next *tefillah*, you must repeat the *Amidah* twice. However, if you made the error on any Friday afternoon or *erev Pesach*, you **do not** make it up by reciting the *Shabbos* or *Yom Tov Amidah* an additional time. Before repeating the *Amidah*, you may be *Mafsik*.

What did I do?

When did I remember?

Now I should...

Chanukah Candle Lighting



Notes

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

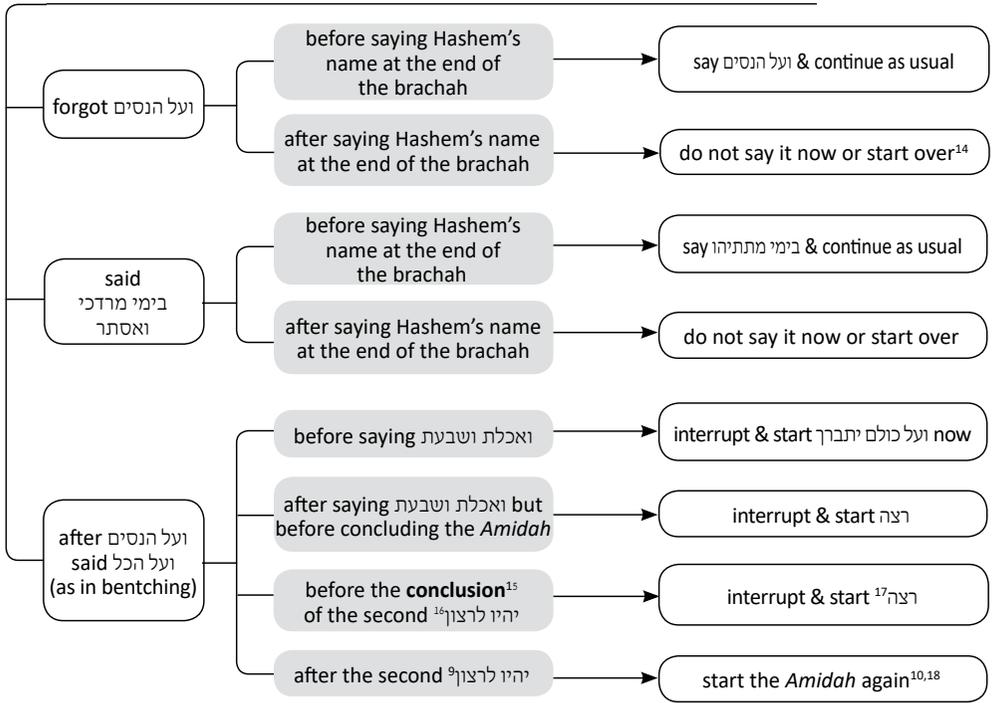
13. by speaking about something that is not connected with the mitzvah at hand.

What did I do?

When did I remember?

Now I should...

Chanukah Amidah • Maariv, Shacharis, Musaf & Minchah



Notes

14. According to some opinions, you should say the following before the second יהיו לרצון:

הרחמן הוא יעשה לנו נסים, כמו שעשה לאבותינו בימים ההם בזמן הזה. בימי מתתיהו...

15. Even if he already said Hashem's Name you should Stop and go back to רצה.

16. If you started נצור אלקי נצור and the Chazzan Reached Kedusha you should answer and you can then go back to רצה.

17. If you remembered after reciting Hashem's name at the end

of the brachah of the טוב שמך or ישראל בשלום את עמו, say למדני למודי and go back to חקיק.

18. On motzoei Shabbos: repeat אתה חוננתנו. On Rosh Chodesh: repeat יעלה ויבוא. However ועל הנסים need not be repeated.

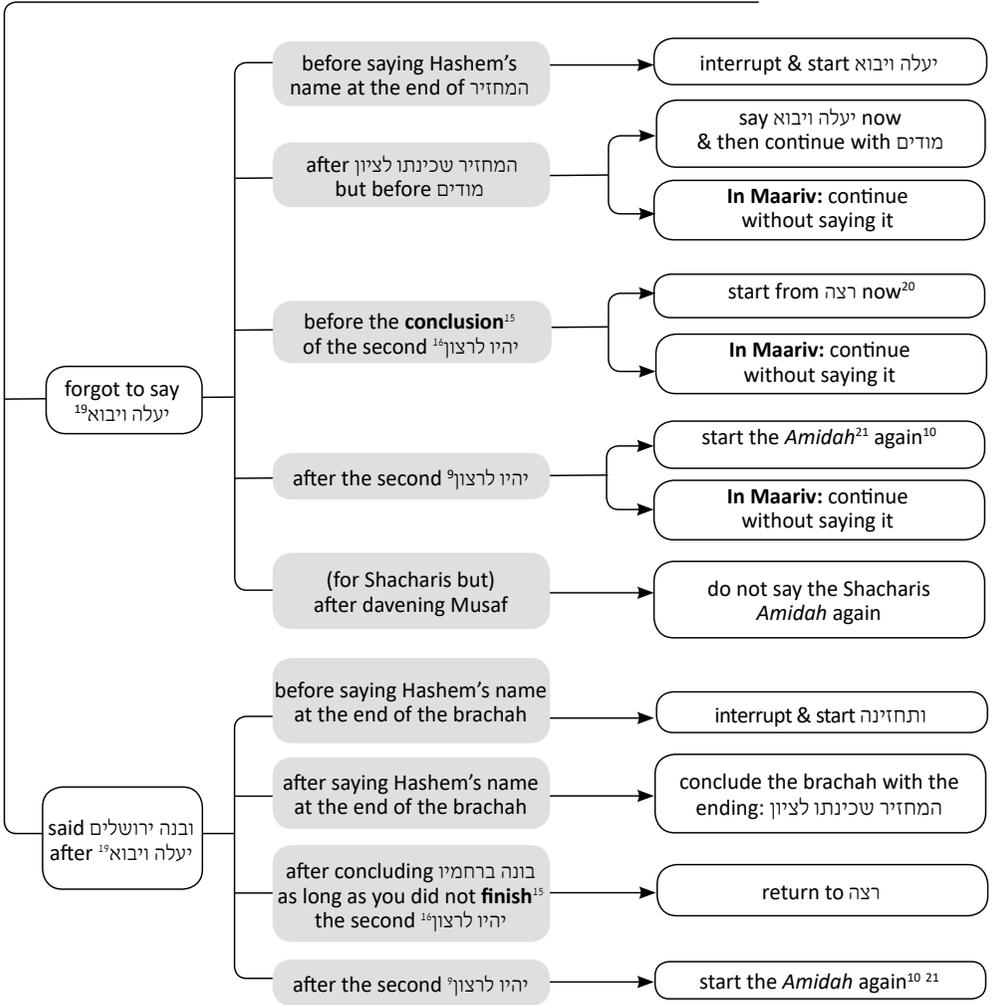
If you remembered after the time has arrived for the next tefillah, say the Amidah, and then repeat it to make up for the earlier one. If you made the error on Friday afternoon, you make it up by reciting the Shabbos Amidah an additional time. Before repeating the Amidah, you may be Mafsik.

What did I do?

When did I remember?

Now I should...

Rosh Chodesh Amidah • Maariv, Shacharis & Minchah



Notes

19. or if you are unsure what you said.

20. If you remembered after reciting Hashem's name at the end of the brachah of שמך הטוב בשלום or הטוב שמך, say המברך את עמו ישראל בשלום and go back to רצה. רצה. למדני חקין

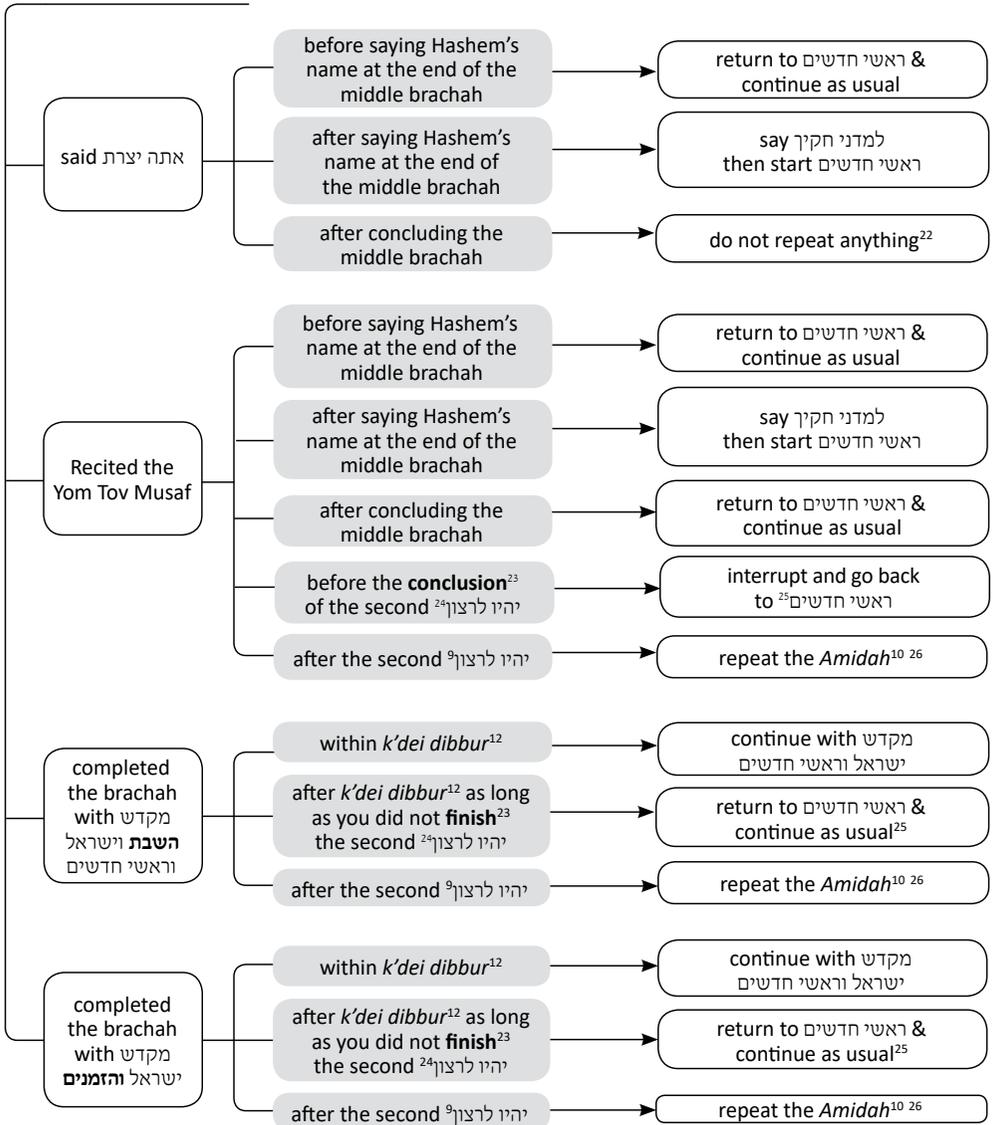
21. There is no need to repeat הנסים ועל הנסים. If you have already removed your tefilin (during Shacharis) you should preferably don them again.

What did I do?

When did I remember?

Now I should...

Musaf Amidah



Notes

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

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

23. Even if he already said Hashem's Name you should Stop and

go back to ראשי חדשים.

24. If you started אלקי נצור and the Chazzan Reached *Kedusha* you should answer and you can then go back to ראשי חדשים.

25. If you remembered after reciting Hashem's name at the end of the brachah of שמך הטוב בשלום or הטוב שמך והטוב בשלום, say למדני חקיקך and go back to ראשי חדשים.

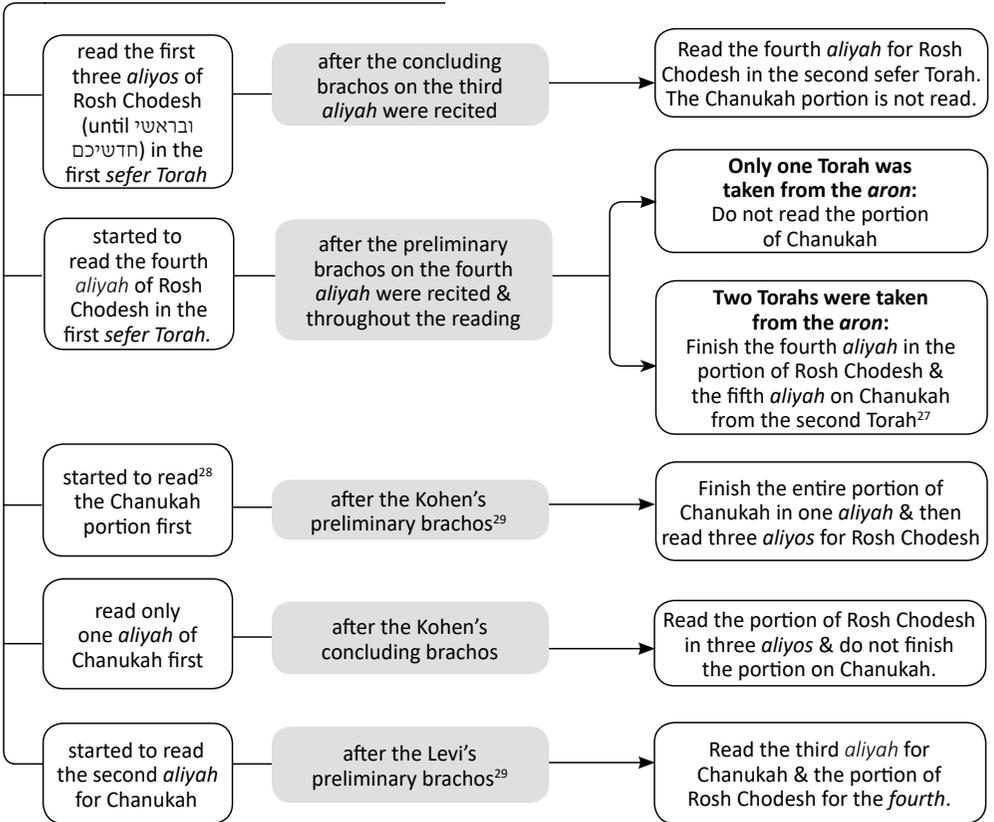
26. There is no need to repeat ועל הנסים.

What did I do?

When did I remember?

Now I should...

Krias Hatorah • Rosh Chodesh



Notes

27. If *Kaddish* was recited after *Revii*, do not say it again.

28. If the Kohen did not start the blessings but only opened the *sefer Torah* to the Chanukah reading, a second *sefer*

Torah is removed and the section for Rosh Chodesh is read as normal.

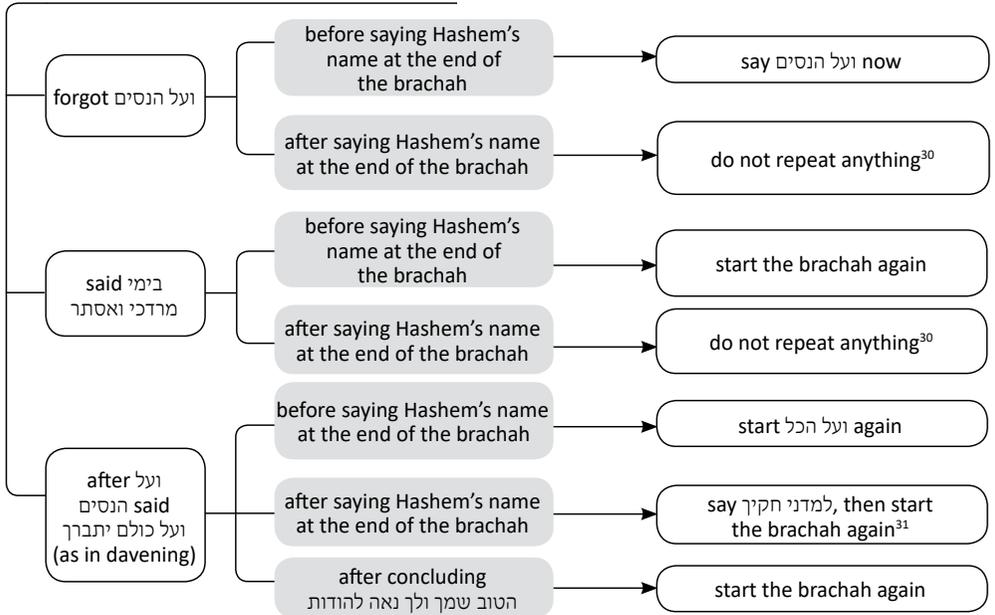
29. Even if you only said ברוך אתה ה'.

What did I do?

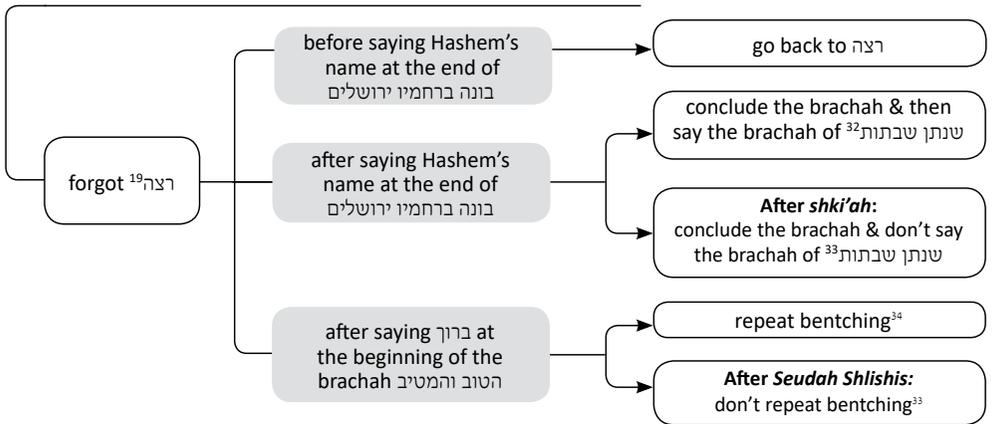
When did I remember?

Now I should...

Birchas Hamazon • Chanukah



Birchas Hamazon • Shabbos Chanukah



Notes

- 30. When you get up to הרחמן הוא יזכנו say: הרחמן הוא יעשה לנו נסים כמו שעשה לאבותינו בימים ההם בזמן הזה. בימי מתניהו...
- 31. If you concluded ועל המזון ועל הארץ ועל הנסים, you are *yotzeh*.
- 32. as stated in the siddur (for Shabbos):

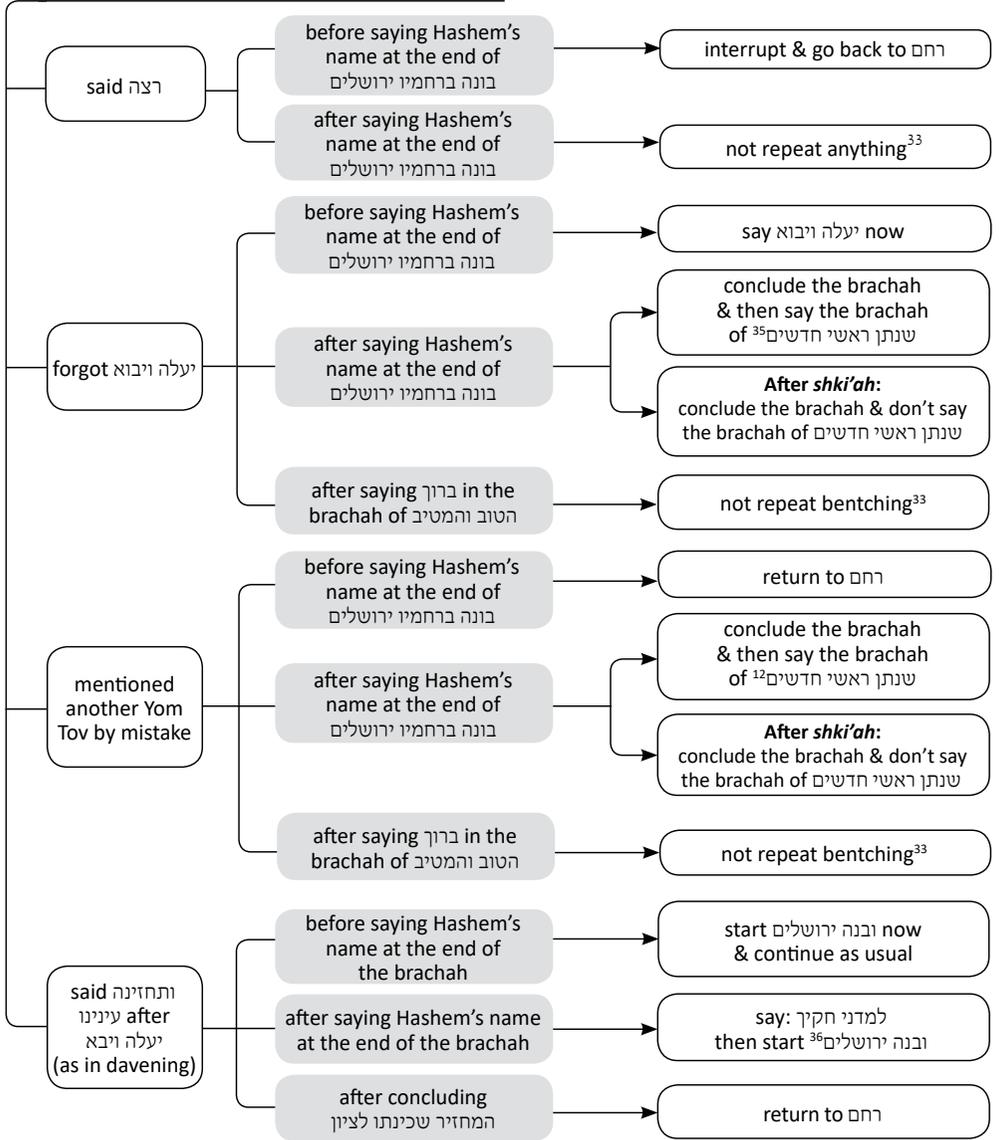
- ברוך אתה ה' אלוקינו מלך העולם שנתן שבתות למנוחה לעמו ישראל באהבה לאות ולברית ברוך אתה ה' מקדש השבת.
- 33. If you did not realize that you are not meant to repeat bentsching and you started saying it again, stop wherever you are currently holding—even in middle of a brachah.
- 34. There is no need to repeat ועל הנסים.

What did I do?

When did I remember?

Now I should...

Birchas Hamazon • Rosh Chodesh



Notes

35. as stated in the siddur (for Rosh Chodesh): ברוך אתה ה' אלוהינו מלך העולם שנתן ראשי חדשים לעמו ישראל לזכרון **without** the conclusion.

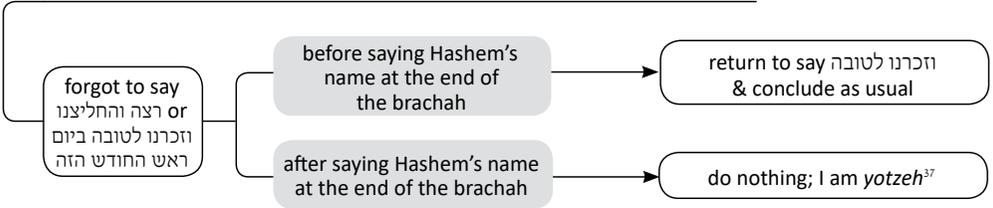
36. If you concluded the brachah with בונה ברחמינו ירושלים, you are *yotzeh*.

What did I do?

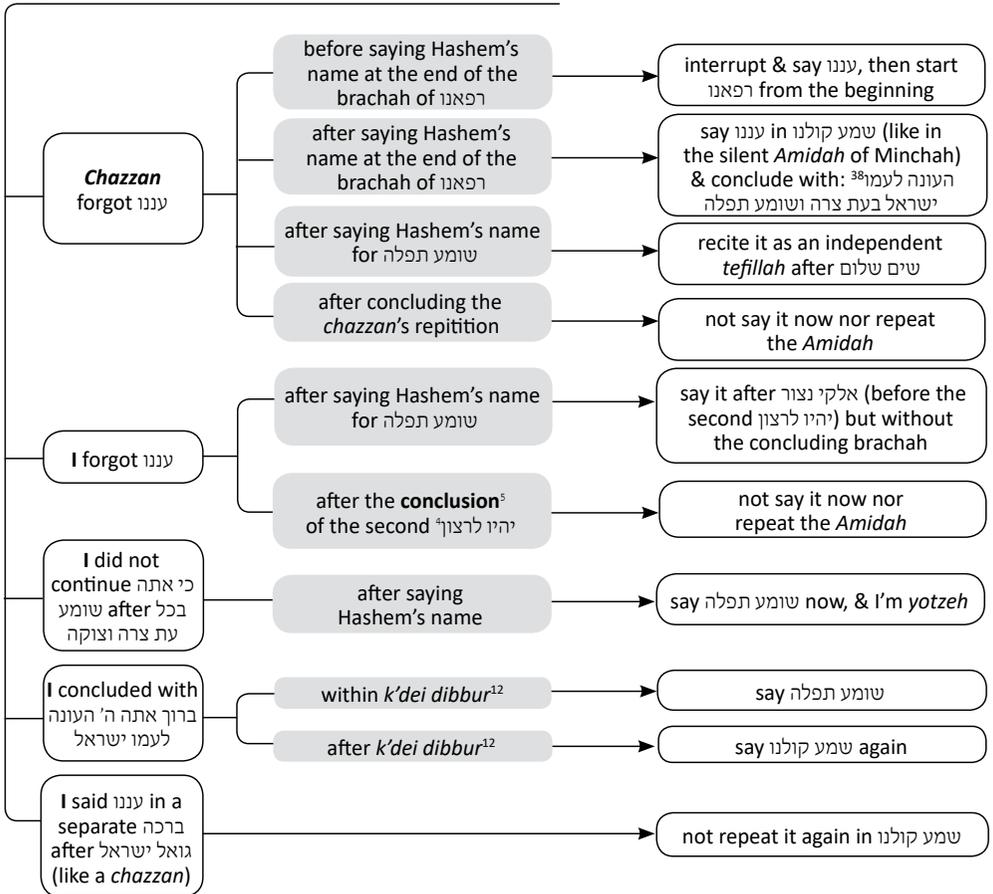
When did I remember?

Now I should...

Me'ein Shalosh • Shabbos Chanukah or Rosh Chodesh



Shacharis & Minchah • Asarah B'Teves



Notes

37. even when saying *Al Hamichya* on *mezonos*, except if the *mezonos* is eaten instead of bread (in which case you repeat *Al Hamichya*)

38. If you concluded with שומע תפילה, you are *yotzeh*.