

◆ One Chanukah, the Brisker Rav met the Gerrer Rebbe on a street. They began conversing in Torah. During the conversation, the Brisker Rav took the opportunity to pose the following question to the Rebbe: “I have heard that his honor hosts large *tishen* on the nights of Chanukah which continue on until very late hours of the morning. The Chassidim turn up in throngs, and a spiritual uplifting time is enjoyed by all. It is certainly appropriate to host a festive *seuda* on Chanukah as cited by the Rema (O.C. 670:2), but he also says there, that it is a ‘bit’ of a mitzvah. This closer reading of the Rema indicates that he recommends short celebrations....”

On a cue, the Rebbe - who was known for his sharp wit - was ready with an answer: “I always teach my chassidim to avoid the temptations of the *yetzer hora* like a plague! Even a miniscule *aveira* must be viewed as a terrible sin. Flee, Flee! But the converse is also true: every mitzvah, even a ‘small’ one, must be viewed of considerable size. Every mitzvah is great enough to make a big celebration over it!” ◆

Hints & Answers\* **CHANUKA HALACHA:** We don’t mention Chanukah in the *Me’ein Shalosh* blessing (O.C. 208:12). One of the reasons given is because *Al Hanissim* needs to be said in the part where we give thanks to Hashem (Shabbos 24a), and the *Me’ein Shalosh* blessing does not have such part, except for the last sentence before the ending *bracha*. But at that point, an interruption cannot be made (see *Machtzis Hashekel* 208:18) **CHANUKA RIDDLES & TRIVIA:** 1. On the 7th night, after the candles were lit for the required amount of time, he put out one of the candles. There was still plenty of wax on it, and thus, he used it for the 8th night. (see O.C. 672:2) 2. On *motzei* Shabbos, after Shmonei Esrei we say *Vihy noam* verses, then psalm 91, and then, we repeat the last verse of that psalm (i.e., “*Orech yomim...*”). We repeat that verse so that the total number of words (starting from *Vihy noam*) would be equal to 130, which is the same gematrical value of the word “הַכֹּהֲנִים” - to tell us that the Chashmanoyim (who were Kohanim) would say Psalm 91 as they were battling against the Greeks. In Psalm 91, king Dovid declares that it’s because of the fact that he said “You, Hashem are my refuge!” he merited to have an extraordinary Divine protection (see Rashi’s commentary on that psalm). And Chashmanoyim said Psalm 91 during the war because for them also, this Bitachon was their “weapon.” And this “weapon”, in fact, caused them to be victorious (see *Nesivos Shalom*, on Chanukah, section “Bitachon”). On *motzei* Shabbos we are reminded of this, and we march into the week with this important *hashkafa* and *chizuk*. 3. The first letters of the words “*Mi kamocha ba’eilim Hashem*” spell out מְכַבֵּד. 4. A Shabbos candle (Shabbos 23b). One of the reasons for why we have the mitzva to light Shabbos candles is to ensure *shalom bais* in our homes (Sitting in darkness causes suffering to people, which in turn can undermine *shalom bais* - see Rashi’s commentary to Shabbos 23b). Although publicizing the miracle of Channuka is an enormous mitzva, *shalom bais* is even greater (Shabbos *ibid.*) 5. Yes (source: *Maharsham* quoted in “*Chanukah l’Chol Mishpacha*”, p. 107). 6. Due to the fact that the Sanctuary was filled with idols at that time, the Chashmonayim took out the Menorah from the Sanctuary, placed it in the Courtyard and lit it there. Due to this, the miracle of Chanukkah because publicized since people saw the Menorah stay lit for 8 consecutive days. (source: *Chasam Sofer* quoted in “*Chanukah l’Chol Mishpacha*” p.106). | \*Note: As such, Menucha’s answer are not to be taken as final decisions in halacha.

# Menucha

A Shabbos table companion  
for the whole family

לע"נ ר' ברוך חיים בן שלמון ז"ל

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## Chanuka Halacha Mentioning Chanukah in Me'ein Shalosh



As Reuven left the bakery holding a bag with a donut in his hand, he headed for the park. When he reached the park, he sat down on a bench, open the bag and took out the donut. He marveled it’s beauty. “I love Chanukah!” exclaimed Reuven and proceeded making a *bracha* on the donut.

After he finished eating the donut, he began saying the after-*bracha* on the donut with much joy. He did not have a siddur with him, so he was saying the *bracha* by heart. When he reached close to the middle of the *bracha* he began wondering if there is a special line that’s said on Chanukah in the Al Hamicha *bracha*. “I know we insert a line when it’s Shabbos, Yom Tom, Rosh Chodesh...” he thought to himself, “but I am not sure if we do it on Chanukah.”

**Question:** Is there a special line inserted on Chanuka in the *Me’ein Shalosh bracha*?

(The “Hints & Answers” section is on page 4)

### DEDICATIONS

◆ for *refuah sheleima* to those who need it

“So Pharaoh sent and called for Yosef, and they rushed him from the prison, and he shaved and changed his clothes, and he [then] came to Pharaoh.” (Bereishis 41:14)

**Q. Why does the Torah need to let us know that Yosef shaved and changed his clothes before he appeared before Pharaoh?**

**A.** The Torah is teaching us a valuable lesson. Although Yosef was rushed to hear Pharaoh’s dreams, he took time to prepare himself before standing in front of the king. All the more so, we need to prepare ourselves before *tefilla* - even though we might be in a rush - so that we can stand before *HaShem* with proper thoughts, feelings and concentration.

**נֶר הַ נִּשְׁמַת אָדָם - A man's soul is HaShem's candle** (Mishlei 20:27). This candle, teaches the Sefas Emes, exists in every Jew and it always remains pure - it is our holy *Neshama*. We testify about it in the morning blessings as we say "...the *Neshama* that You gave me is pure." Quoting from his Rebbi, the Chidushei HaRim, the Sefas Emes says further that finding the one pure jar of oil in the Beis Hamikdash is a symbolism that inside a person - who is a mini Beis HaMikdash - there is "one jar of pure oil" that *HaShem* always protects from impurities [Sefas Emes, Chanuka 5632].

On a physical level, Chanukah is a time of lighting the candles of the menorah to publicize the miracle. The Sefas Emes [Chanukah 5631] teaches that on a spiritual level, Chanukah is a time to learn how to find and reveal the inner candle - the pure *Neshama*. In the story of Chanukah, that one jar of pure oil was spread out in a miraculous way to the entire duration of time that was needed to prepare new oil. Similarly, teaches the Sefas Emes, our job is not only to find that "one jar of pure oil" within ourselves, but to also spread it into every action of our lives. In other words, once a person finds that pure light of his *Neshama*, he now needs to infuse that light into every fiber of his life.

Further, it follows, that on Chanukah one also needs to learn how to find the "jar of pure oil" in his/her partner in life – i.e., in his/her spouse. And certainly, parents need to find the "jar of pure oil" in every child that they brought into the world. This will enable the parents to light the most precious menorah which they possess.



## CHANUKAH RIDDLES & TRIVIA



1. Before lighting Chanukkah candles on the 7th night of Chanukkah, Yehuda counted the wax candles that he had, to make sure that he had a total of 15 candles – i.e., 7 for tonight and 8 for tomorrow night. To his dismay, he realized that he only had 14 candles. But Yehuda was very witty, and without breaking any of the candles, somehow he managed to fulfill the mitzvah of lighting the Chanukkah candles on the 7th and the 8th nights of Chanukkah of that year, on a *mehadrin min hamehadrin* level, using just these 14 candles. Can you be witty and figure out how Yehuda did that?
2. On almost every *motzei* Shabbos we are reminded of Channukah! Do you know where? [Hint: Ma'ariv]
3. Where in *Shiras HaYam* is there a hint to the Maccabees?! [Hint: The *roshei teivos* (1st letters of each word) of four adjacent words in the *Shirah*, spell out the word מכרי]
4. During Chanukkah, on a Friday morning, Mr. Cohen went to the market to shopping for a candle. After selling everything that he possible could, he had enough money to buy only one candle. Should he buy a candle for Shabbos or for Chanukkah?
5. Shimon was a young businessman. He was not married yet. Once, he took a long journey by ship from Spain to America. He was still on a ship when Chanukkah came. Does he have an obligation to light Chanukkah candles on the ship?
6. Where was the Menorah of the Beis Hamikdash standing - in the Courtyard (חצר) or in the Sanctuary (היכל)? Of course, everyone knows that it was inside the Sanctuary. If so why do we say in *Al HaNissim*: וְהִדְלִיקוּ נֵרוֹת בְּחִצְרוֹת קֹדֶשׁ - “And they kindled candles in the Courtyards of Your Sanctuary”?!