

a **CALL** *to*
ACTION

CHANUKAH

PRACTICAL INSTRUCTION
FROM THE TEACHINGS OF THE REBBE
5748-5752

A PROJECT OF
HaMaaseh Hu HaIkar

Foreword

We are pleased to bring you this newly revised edition of *a CALL to ACTION*. Translated from its Hebrew counterpart, *HaMaaseh Hu Halkar*, this presentation is a collection of practical instruction from the Rebbe's Sichos pertaining to the festival of Chanukah.

HaMaaseh Hu Halkar is a compilation of Hora'os ("directives") culled from the Rebbe's talks in the years 5748 to 5752 (1988-1992), from both edited and unedited sources ("Muga" and "Bilti Muga"); we have expended great effort in our attempt to capture some of the Rebbe's carefully calculated and instructive phrasing. This edition's English translation was provided by Rabbi Yaakov Paley.

At this time, when Moshiach's arrival is imminent, the Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach, has emphasized the primacy of action. We are now beginning to experience the era when we will fully appreciate "the superiority of deed" above scholarship. May this take place completely and immediately!

Editorial Office of
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a CALL to ACTION

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Table of Contents

C h a n u k a h	5
Introduction / Chanukah Preparations / Promote Chanukah in advance / Everyone must know / Begin spiritual service of Chanukah early / Discover your inner “jar of pure oil”	
Variations in the Calendar	6
1) When Erev Chanukah occurs on Friday / 2) When the first night of Chanukah is Motzei Shabbos / 3) When Erev Chanukah coincides with Shabbos	
1) When Erev Chanukah occurs on Friday	6
Provide needs for a special shabbos / Supply needy with a Menorah kit / Study Chanukah Ma’amarim	
2) When the first night of Chanukah is Motzei Shabbos	7
Last reminders before Shabbos / Prepare to light Menorah right after Shabbos / Prepare everything on Friday / Include it in Mivtzah Chanukah / Celebrate an early victory	
Chanukah Customs	9
Gut Yom Tov / Latkes and doughnuts / Extra Tzedakah / Chanukah Se’udos / Mitzvah to rejoice	
The Menorah	12
Buy a magnificent Menorah / In shul light at Shacharis / 24 hr Shul Menorah / Keep out of reach of children / Rebbeim – men light for woman too / Ladies light where no men	
Chanukah is Education	13
Educational Powers / Act to advance Jewish Ed / Be a Menorah – further efforts each day / Innovative efforts / Act to bring Moshiach / Listen to the lights / Kids – ask about Chanukah / Tell them of Chanukah and Jewish history	
Two Proposals	17
Introduction / 1) Children light their Menorah by their room / Personalized education / Why question? / Explain the significance / 2) Distributing “Chanukah Gelt” / Custom of the rebbeim / Every Day / So they will heighten their efforts / Make up for Shabbos on Erev Shabbos or Sunday / Extra on fourth and	

fifth nights / Make it worth waiting for / Sanctifying money / Whole family gives Gelt / So they should give more Tzedakah / Train and trust them

Mitzvah to Publicize the Miracle24

Speak about Chanukah after lighting Menorah / Eight unique messages / Farbrengens and Chanukah Parties / Acknowledge modern miracles / “Latkes Avent” / Chanukah gatherings in schools / Offices, hostipals, etc

Illuminate the dark27

Introduction / Share whatever you have / Illuminate personal affairs / Spread light everywhere / Study with and educate your own children / Victory in outreach / A Menorah in every home / Public lightings / Every Jew a gleaming golden branch / Women illuminate their families / Hafatzah – give the globe a g-dly glow / Sheva Mitzvos – righteous gentiles / Unite all Jewry in preparing for Geulah

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Thank you

*Translated in the memory of **Yitzchok Yosef ben Yaakov Mordechai**.*

Chanukah

INTRODUCTION

Chanukah instructs us to reach out and illumination the world with light of Torah inner teachings and to ensure that every Jew receives a proper Jewish education.

These are formidable tasks, especially given the prevalent darkness; however, the power to engage in these areas has been given to us by the Rebbe – we have been given the ability to both reach out and succeed.¹

Chanukah Preparations

PROMOTE CHANUKAH IN ADVANCE

- In addition to preparing ourselves for Chanukah, we should also remind our neighbors, acquaintances and so on about Chanukah.⁶

EVERYONE MUST KNOW

- Where there is even the slightest doubt that certain people may yet be unaware of the great significance and excitement surrounding Chanukah, it is crucial that we inform them;² we should make sure that they will also celebrate Chanukah in the most complete way and they, too, will begin their preparations well ahead of time.⁶

BEGIN SPIRITUAL SERVICE OF CHANUKAH EARLY

- Each of us should begin our divine service that pertains to Chanukah on *Erev* Chanukah – the day preceding, and with a similar power to, Chanukah.³

1. See Parshas Mikeitz 5748; Hisva'aduyos p.131.

2. ...How much more so concerning those who *definitely* know nothing about Chanukah whatsoever.

3. **Prepare the world for the light of Torah**

The preparation of the oil, wicks, etc., for the kindling of the Menorah, takes place on Erev Chanukah. From this, we should understand that the same applies to our spiritual preparations (our divine service):

Erev Chanukah is similar to Chanukah itself and it also involves illuminating the physical world with the “flame of Mitzvos and the light of Torah.” Erev

DISCOVER YOUR INNER “JAR OF PURE OIL”

- An important part of Chanukah was the fact that the Jews searched and discovered one small jar of pure oil that was sealed with the High Priest’s seal. To reflect this, we should perform the divine service that prepares us for the spiritual counterpart of this “discovery” on every Erev Chanukah. We will then be spiritually prepared to illuminate our first day of Chanukah with the Mitzvah of lighting the Menorah.⁴

Variations in the Calendar

This section discusses directives pertaining to three particular cases:

- 1) When Erev Chanukah occurs on Friday
- 2) When the first night of Chanukah is Motzei Shabbos
- 3) When Erev Chanukah coincides with Shabbos

1) When Erev Chanukah occurs on Friday

PROVIDE NEEDS FOR A SPECIAL SHABBOS

- When we give a needy person his Shabbos requirements on an Erev Shabbos that coincides with Erev Chanukah, then we should not only supply him with the necessities of a regular Shabbos – but rather, for a *Shabbos Chanukah*. We should ensure that the uniqueness of Shabbos Chanukah is readily apparent even in his Shabbos meals.⁵

Chanukah is the preparatory day for Chanukah, when we prepare the world to accept the illumination of the Chanukah lights. (Erev Chanukah 5748; Hisva’aduyos p.89)

Chanukah begins early in Shul

Erev Chanukah contains some of Chanukah itself. This is expressed in the law and Jewish custom that on Erev Chanukah following the Minchah service, a few hours prior to the commencement of Chanukah when (when everyone will light the Menorah in their personal homes) we already kindle the Chanukah lights in Shul, in the presence of a holy congregation, the Minyan, etc. (ibid. p.90)

4. Erev Chanukah 5750; Hisva’aduyos p.33.

5. **Twin preparations**

Since it is presently the day prior to both Shabbos and Chanukah, we will now promote the most *practical* activities – the main thing is the *deed*:

SUPPLY NEEDY WITH A MENORAH KIT

- We should also supply the needy with their requirements for the entire Chanukah – including lighting the Menorah and so forth.⁵

STUDY CHANUKAH MA'AMARIM

- This addition for Shabbos Chanukah also applies to our spiritual service: We should add to our regular Torah study, the many Chassidic discourses that are associated with the virtue caused by the combination of Shabbos and Chanukah.⁵

2) When the first night of Chanukah is Motzei Shabbos

LAST REMINDERS BEFORE SHABBOS

- When Chanukah begins immediately following Shabbos, then the proper time to promote and remind everyone about Chanukah, is on *Erev* Shabbos; there won't be any spare time between Shabbos and Chanukah to promote the issues that need to be implemented straight away.⁶

PREPARE TO LIGHT MENORAH RIGHT AFTER SHABBOS

- The Menorah should be lit immediately following Shabbos – the sooner the better. For that reason, we should make all preparations for the Menorah lighting that cannot be done on Shabbos, on *Erev* Shabbos.⁶

PREPARE EVERYTHING ON FRIDAY

- Even actions which *are* permissible to perform on Shabbos should nevertheless be done on *Erev* Shabbos. That will make things more orderly and eliminate the need for extra caution concerning the law of Muktzeh articles and our guarding each and every movement during Shabbos.⁶

Remember that today is *Erev* Shabbos, when we prepare for Shabbos – concerning which it is written, “On Friday, when they are preparing ... they will find double [portions of Manna].”

Today is also *Erev* Chanukah, when we prepare for all aspects of Chanukah as well...

Best of both

In fact, we need to prepare for 1) a most unique *Shabbos* (*Shabbos Chanukah*) and 2) a unique day of *Chanukah* (*Shabbos Chanukah*). After all, it is human nature to consider something more important – and it is better received – when it is combined with another important matter. (*Erev Chanukah* 5750; *Hisva'aduyos* p.31-34)

6. ...Neither can we rely on publicizing these matters during Shabbos itself. (*Night of 23rd* of *Kislev* 5749; *Hisva'aduyos* p.22)

INCLUDE IT IN MIVTZA CHANUKAH

- When informing people about Chanukah and all that it entails, we should also inform them of the need to prepare for Chanukah on Erev Shabbos.⁶

CELEBRATE AN EARLY VICTORY

- When Erev Chanukah coincides with Shabbos, we should expand the joy of Chanukah to include Erev Chanukah as well; due to the sanctity of Shabbos, our victory in battle (which reoccurs in a spiritual form on each anniversary of the Macabee's victory,⁷ the 24th of Kislev) is accomplished without the slightest trace of pain or bother.⁸

7. On which day did the victory occur?

There is an opinion amongst the early Sages (quoted in many Chassidic discourses of the Alter Rebbe as well as the other Chabad Rebbes) that the conclusion of the great and miraculous victory in battle which is celebrated on Chanukah, actually occurred on the 24th of Kislev (unlike Rambam's view, that it occurred on the 25th of Kislev).

Victory over both "Greeks" and "Jews"

Now, since the accomplishments of these major events reoccur on each anniversary, this victory is repeated each and every year on the 24th of Kislev; on every Erev Chanukah, the Jews are again victorious over all of those who desire to cause us to "forget Your Torah and violate the decrees of Your Will," G-d Forbid – both the "Greeks" themselves as well as the *Jewish* "Hellenists"...

Triumph is good, peace is better

If, according to the view explained earlier, the victory in battle was completed on the 24th of Kislev, why was Chanukah established on the 25th? After all, Chanukah is a celebration of the miraculous victory in battle *in addition* to the miracle of the jar of oil. [Note that the festival of Pesach is celebrated on the night when the final plague (death of the first-borns) struck the Egyptians, i.e., on the night of the "victory" in "battle."]

Rather, we must say that Chanukah was not established on the day of the victory (the 24th) because it primarily celebrates the day when the victorious Jews finally *rested* from war.

In fact, this is also alluded to in the name "Chanukah" (חֲנֻכָּה), which is a combination of "Chanu" (חָנַו), "they rested," and the letters Chaf and Hei, which spell "25" (כ"ה); they rested from battle on the 25th of Kislev. (Parshas Vayeishev, Erev Chanukah 5749; Hisva'aduyos p.27)

8. Getting our hands dirty

When the 24th of Kislev is a weekday, then the day contains a residue of the battle against the forces of evil; and our Sages tell us that "one who wrestles with a filthy opponent cannot help but become soiled..." There is therefore no place for a joyous celebration [until the *following* day, the 25th, when the battle has been won and evil has been eradicated. Only *then* can we celebrate Chanukah].

How to win without war

However, when the 24th of Kislev coincides with *Shabbos*, then [due to the sanctity and power of Shabbos] the victory is accomplished in a manner that does not allow

Chanukah Customs

GUT YOM TOV

- When we meet during Chanukah, we should wish each other “Good Yom Tov!”⁹

LATKES AND DOUGHNUTS

- During Chanukah, it is customary to eat foods prepared with oil in remembrance of the miracle that occurred with the oil in the Beis HaMikdash.¹⁰

for even a “residue” of evil. [In such a year] therefore, even the 14th of Kislev is already a day for rejoicing.

Disarming smile

This comes in addition to the fact that *every* Shabbos is a “day of joy”; as our Sages explain, the verse “And on your days of rejoicing” refers to Shabbos. We could even say that the joy of Shabbos “enhances” the aspects of Chanukah, so that even the victory in battle [that normally entails “wrestling with a filthy opponent”] is now filled with [only] joy.” (Parshas Vayeishev, Erev Chanukah 5749; Hisva’aduyos p.30) See there at length.

9. **LeShanah Tovah!**

It is customary, that when one Jew meets another during a festival or holiday, the first things they do is ... wish each other “Good Yom Tov,” meaning that the festival should be “good” and its “goodness” should be drawn into the entire year, making it a Shanah Tovah, a good year.

Now, if that is true of *all* festivals, then should *certainly* uphold this custom when we meet each other during *Chanukah* [which is full of ever-increasing light, both physical and spiritual]. (First Day of Rosh Chodesh Teives 5750; Hisva’aduyos p.65)

Meet and greet

When Jews meet or gather ... they begin by wishing each other “Ah gutten tag” (“Good day”). In other words, the very fact that they met makes it a “good day” [Yom Tov]

... This effect is magnified in our present meeting ... since the days of Chanukah are called “Yomim Tovim.” (Address to Tiferes Zekeinim – Levi Yitzchak and Chachmos Nashim, 5749; Hisva’aduyos p.51)

10. Parshas Mikeitz 5752; Hisva’aduyos p.28, note 26.

The war’s all about the oil

[See there (p.26-28): While other festivals are celebrated with a meal (requiring at least bread, water and wine), Chanukah is celebrated by lighting oil lamps. The given reason is that the festivals recall salvation from bodily attack and are commemorated with food and drink; the Greeks, however, primarily attacked our spirit – the Torah – and we therefore create light that represents the G-dly light of Torah.

Now, the physical of a Jew is also spiritual and vice versa; “bread,” “water” and “wine” reflect various levels of Torah. Nevertheless, the spirituality represented by Chanukah supersedes these levels and can only be “embodied” by “oil.”

EXTRA TZEDAKAH

- We should give extra Tzedakah during Chanukah. Through this addition, we will merit to kindle the Menorah in the Third Beis HaMikdash this very year.¹¹

CHANUKAH SE'UDOS

- According to the Rambam's ruling, Chanukah constitutes "days of joy." The Rema also states that it is "somewhat of a Mitzvah" to hold festive meals during Chanukah and concludes: Practically speaking, there is an ancient custom to hold extra [celebratory] meals during these days [of Chanukah]; this is indeed the current custom in our countries.¹²

"Bread" and "water" are essential for basic survival; they represent the Torah's laws that are indispensable for the constant performance of Mitzvos – Jewish life. "Wine" adds joy and pleasure, and alludes to the Torah's inner mysteries and knowledge of the divine that adds enthusiasm and the love of G-d to our Mitzvah observance.

"Oil," however, is not necessary for survival and is even harmful when consumed on its own – rather, a few mere drops are mixed with other ingredients; "oil" represents the innermost dimension of Torah ("Razin DeRazin" – "secrets of secrets"). Even on Chanukah, the "festival of oil," when this level is celebrated, absorbed and internalized within us – which is why it is customary to physically *consume* oil – we nevertheless acknowledge its great intensity and quality; physically too, we merely use it to cook *other* foods, and the Menorah's lights may not be used, but merely *viewed*.]

11. Chanukah 5748; Hisva'aduyos p.102.

Time to give

During Chanukah, we should give plenty of Tzedakah. This includes Shabbos Chanukah, when we provide Tzedakah in the form of food and drink; a type of Tzedakah that contains superiority over monetary aid (as the Gemara explains concerning the superiority of the Tzedakah provided by housewives, who provide the immediate benefit of food and drink, over the monetary aid extended by their husbands). We could also provide Tzedakah on Shabbos through spiritual means – by studying Torah with someone or providing a good piece of advice and so forth. (Parshas Mikeitz 5749; Hisva'aduyos p.86)

Ancient practice

It is stated in Magen Avraham (on the Shulchan Aruch), at the beginning of the Laws of Chanukah: It is customary for the destitute youth to go collecting from door to door. (Parshas Vayeishev 5748; Hisva'aduyos p.65, footnote 80)

12. **Be happy – it's the law**

"This is implied in the Rambam's words: These eight days, beginning with the eve of the 25th of Kislev, are days of joy and thanksgiving. (Parshas Vayeishev 5749; Hisva'aduyos p.30)

This is also the Halachah, as the Rema states. (ibid, p.34)

See the Hashlamah to the Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch there, where, after citing various views [for the establishment of Chanukah], he concludes with the Rema's

MITZVAH TO REJOICE

• There are different opinions [as to whether we have an obligation to be especially joyful during Chanukah].¹³ Nevertheless, just as all Jews perform the Mitzvah of lighting the Menorah according to the most scrupulous view, “Mehadrin Min HaMehadrin” [by kindling a total of 36 lights over Chanukah, despite the existence of differing opinions that suggest a lesser figure], we should be equally scrupulous about the Mitzvah to be joyful during Chanukah.¹⁴

statement. (ibid, footnote 81).

Gatherings of joy and light

Since this year is [5748, which in Hebrew forms the word] “Tesamach,” meaning “rejoice” ... we should certainly be exceedingly joyful. During Chanukah, it is worthwhile and fitting to hold joyous Farbrengens and gatherings (in the spirit of “Hakhel”) in each location. There should be joyful gatherings for men, women and children, and the participants should be aroused to advance in Torah and Mitzvos – “the flame of Mitzvos and the light of Torah.” (Parshas Vayeishev 5748; Hisva’aduyos p.67) See also there, footnote 102.

13. **Like Simchas Torah**

It could be said, that according to those alternative opinions, who state that there is no Rabbinical commandment to rejoice during Chanukah, our Chanukah rejoicing bears an similar advantage to that of our custom to hold *Hakafos* (circuits) on Simchas Torah.

True, the *Hakafos* were not established by Biblical command (as was the rejoicing by the wine libations in the Temple) or even by Rabbinical enactment (such as the great rejoicing surrounding the water libations on Sukkos, concerning which it is stated (Sukah 51a), “He who has never seen the rejoicing of the Simchas Beis HaSho’evo has never witnessed joy in his life”). Nevertheless, the custom to rejoice on Chanukah and by the *Hakafos* is in a way far greater. See Likutei Torah, Derushei Sukkos, 80c. (Parshas Vayeishev 5748; Hisva’aduyos p.34, footnote 79) [Chassidus explains that there are matters that are so very basic and essential does not require a command; in the same way, customs such as the *Hakafos* are not mentioned in Scripture or even Rabbinical enactments – they reach the very spiritual essence of the occasion, and are therefore “self-understood.”]

14. **Ibid.**

I mean what I say

We should therefore be exceedingly joyful on Chanukah – contrary to those who think otherwise and seriously hope that my words were not meant to be taken literally... (Tochen Katzar to ibid.)

Simchah BeHiddur

I sincerely hope that there will not be a need to clarify whether or not Chanukah was in fact celebrated as befits “days of joy” (meaning that people took time off from their other affairs in order to spend time rejoicing), because *everyone* will hopefully comply with this directive in an enhanced manner – “Mehadrin Min HaMehadrin” – without the need for further prompting.

The Menorah

BUY A MAGNIFICENT MENORAH

- The obligation to “beautify Mitzvos” (in accordance with the verse “This is my G-d and I will glorify Him” – Shemos 15:2) includes obtaining a beautiful Menorah for Chanukah.¹⁵

IN SHUL LIGHT AT SHACHARIS

- It is our custom to relight the Shul Menorah each morning, using the same number of candles that were lit the night before.¹⁶

24 HR SHUL MENORAH

- In order to intensify the spirit of Chanukah, it is worthwhile to ensure that the Shul Menorah (which is seen by everyone, for they all gather in Shul) remains lit twenty-four hours a day.

KEEP OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN

- The Shul Menorah should only remain lit provided that there is absolutely no concern that children will play with it.¹⁷

REBBEIM – MEN LIGHT FOR WOMAN TOO

- In the households of the Chabad Rebbes, women and girls do not light their own Menorah; rather, they fulfill their obligation along with their fathers, or, when they are older, by their husbands.¹⁸ [However, see below, footnotes 38 and 39; nowadays, for the sake of enhancing education, young girls could also light their own Menorah]

LADIES LIGHT WHERE NO MEN

- Where there are no men to light the Menorah, we should make certain that a woman or a girl lights it.¹⁹

Need help rejoicing?

After all, we received encouragement in this regard from the Previous Rebbe himself, and especially in his Proclamation – why, the mere sight of the Proclamation’s title “Immediate Teshuvah, Immediate Redemption!” (before one even views its contents) is already enough to trigger a most powerful inspiration, accompanied by great joy and gladness. (Hisva’aduyos, *ibid*, p.45)

15. Parshas Mikeitz 5750; Hisva’aduyos p.86, footnote 69.

16. Yechidus on the 27th of Kislev 5750; Hisva’aduyos p.48.

17. Parshas Vayeishev 5750; Hisva’aduyos p.51, footnote 69.

18. *Ibid*, footnote 70.

19. ... Although, for numerous reasons, it is better for a man to light the Menorah, than for a woman. (Night of 23rd of Kislev 5749; Hisva’aduyos p.23)

Chanukah is Education

EDUCATIONAL POWERS

- One of the meanings of Chanukah is “education” (“Chinuch”)²⁰; during Chanukah²¹ we receive special powers to advance education²² and to bolster and renew the “flame of Mitzvos

20. Festival of Education

Since “Chanukah” means “education” (“Chinuch”), we can readily appreciate just how relevant these days really are for Jewish children. It is during Chanukah that we should “Mechaneich” – “educate” and infuse them with greater purity so that their lives are more “Jewish,” and are further permeated with holiness. (28th of Kislev 5749; Hisva’aduyos p.58)

Rededication

Chanukah is “Chinuch” [“educate,” “inaugurate” and “dedicate” share the same root in Hebrew and all reflect on preparing something towards a certain goal]; it was so named due to the dedication of the Temple Altar and the inauguration of the Temple itself by the Chashmanaim (Hasmoneans) in the time of Chanukah.

They come to defile

This is repeated each year, [as we recite in the blessing over the Menorah lighting] “[both] in those days, [and also] in this [present] time.” For “in each generation they rise up to destroy us,” starting with [internal attack by] the Yetzer HaRah (evil inclination) and [continuing with external assault by] the redoubled darkness of Exile; they wish to defile (G-d Forbid) each and every Jew’s inner “Temple” and “Altar.” They wish to remove each and every Jew from Torah and Mitzvos, [as we say in the Al HaNisim prayer on Chanukah] “to make them forget Your Torah and to violate the decrees of Your Will.”

Reclaim your inner Sanctuary

For that reason, each year during Chanukah, we receive fresh powers that enable us to “rededicate” our inner, spiritual Alter and Temple; as we are instructed in the Torah, “Make for Me a sanctuary and I will dwell within *them*,” i.e., within each Jew. We accomplish this through renewing and further bolstering our study of Torah and observance of Mitzvos. (Parshas Mikeitz 5748; Hisva’aduyos p.122-123)

21. Every Jew – including you

We should increase with far greater strength in the education of Jewish boys and girls. [As Alter Rebbe states, “this includes the obligation to teach Torah to all students although they are not our biological offspring” – footnote 96]. This comes in addition to increasing our *personal* education, in the most complete and embellished manner. (Parshas Mikeitz 5750; Hisva’aduyos p.89 – regarding the last day of Chanukah, known as “Zos Chanukah.”)

22. The pull of a prize

Education means to become proficient in a new matter, and since “all beginnings entail difficulty,” influences that are beyond the norm are required. Therefore, when we begin educating a young child, it is customary to give him “many gifts” (things that are precious in his young eyes), “in order to train him to desire study”

Start of spiritual training

... The same applies to the dedication of the Alter and Temple during Chanukah: Since “the Greeks entered the Temple and defiled all the oil” there ... the Jews had

and the light of Torah.”²³ Further, this is all accompanied by the additional abilities and enthusiasm that comes with providing education.²⁴

ACT TO ADVANCE JEWISH ED

- For that reason, Chanukah is a most propitious time for all endeavors to provide children with a proper Jewish education.²⁵

BE A MENORAH – FURTHER EFFORTS EACH DAY

- Our renewed and redoubled efforts in education should be subsequently increased and further illuminated from day to day; even if yesterday’s efforts were perfectly complete, nevertheless, each new day should bring yet *further* illuminative efforts.²⁶

to make a re-“dedication” (“Chinuch”), i.e., a brand new influence and intensity in the dedication of their Alter and Temple...” (Parshas Mikeitz 5748; Hisva’aduyos p.123)

23. **Why lights?**

For that reason, the Sages specifically instituted celebrating the miracle of Chanukah by kindling *lights*, which reflects on a new strength and empowerment of “the flame of Mitzvos and the light of Torah.” (ibid, p.124)

24. **New every day**

From here we draw the power for our service of Torah and Mitzvos throughout the entire year, so that it should not be performed in a plain and robotic manner (our having become accustomed to study Torah and perform Mitzvos each day like some constantly reoccurring activity), but rather, to perform our service with a renewed surge of power, in keeping with the abilities granted on Chanukah; a new Chinuch. (ibid, p.124)

Be a Tzaddik

Naturally, this includes your own education too, starting with your *original* “education” [that you received before birth], when Heaven administered the oath “Be a righteous person!”; as the Tzemach Tzedek explained, the word “administered” (“Mashvi’in” – with the letter Shin) could also be translated as “satiated” (“Masvi’im” – with the letter Sin) – meaning that Heaven fills and satiates each person’s soul before their descent into this world with an abundance of powers that enable him to “be a righteous person.” (Parshas Mikeitz 5749; Hisva’aduyos p.84)

25. Parshas Vayeishev 5748; Hisva’aduyos p.64.

26. **Year of daily increase**

This service includes seven consecutive days – a full weekly cycle, Sunday through Shabbos. The weekly cycle, in turn, represents a complete range of modes of divine service, for “each day has its own unique service.” Therefore, the requirement to continuously increase and further illuminate applies to every mode of divine service that is implemented throughout the year. (Parshas Mikeitz 5748; Hisva’aduyos p.124.) See also the address to Tiferes Zekeinim and Chachmos Nashim, 25th of Kislev 5751; Hisva’aduyos p.40)

INNOVATIVE EFFORTS

- Moreover, our daily additional efforts (and especially on Rosh Chodesh²⁷) should be entirely innovative compared with our previous efforts.²⁸

ACT TO BRING MOSHIACH

- We should continuously increase,²⁹ even daily, in matters that will bring the Redemption in actuality and in a revealed way. Among such matters is bolstering our faith and yearning for the coming of Moshiach (to the extent that we truly feel how our very life is lacking as long as Moshiach has not yet come), as well as increasing our Torah study, dissemination of Chassidus and so forth.

LISTEN TO THE LIGHTS

- Concerning the Chanukah lights, there is a well known adage of the Previous Rebbe: We should contemplate³⁰ and listen to what

27. 3 in 1

When Shabbos Chanukah (Shabbos represents a perfection in the theme and goal of Chanukah [as explained earlier in the Sichah]) coincides with Rosh Chodesh, then the lesson we are to take from Chanukah to continuously increase is further amplified; the additions we are to implement should be on a totally innovative level compared to our divine service until now, similar to the moment of “birth” of the new moon that takes place on Rosh Chodesh (“Chodesh” – “month,” shares the root of the word “Chidush” – “innovation”). (Parshas Mikeitz 5752; Hisva’aduyos p.40)

28. 5th of Teves 5749; Hisva’aduyos p.98-99. See there at length.

29. Only way is up

... In a manner that will have a continuous effect even *after* Chanukah; for we follow the Halachic principle: We ascend further in all matters of holiness, but do not descend. (Parshas Mikeitz 5752; Hisva’aduyos p.40, footnote 149)

30. “Elah Lirosam Bilvad”

The text of Haneiros Halalu adjoins us that “we are not permitted to make use of them [the lit Chanukah lights], but only to view them.” In other words, “viewing them” is permitted and indeed *required*.

This includes the activity *derived* from “viewing them,” in keeping with the Previous Rebbe’s adage, “Men darf tzukuken un tzuheren vas di lichtlach dertzeilen,” “We should contemplate (lit. “gaze”) and listen to what the Chanukah lights are recounting.”

Absorbed in light

We should “view” the lights in a manner whereby they permeate our entire being until our entire being is swallowed up in those Chanukah lights, so that all is left is the “lights being viewed”...

This conduct is emphasized in the precise wording of our Sages’ statement, “...but *only* to view them.” [By adding the word “only,” the Sages allude to the fact that while the lights are lit one should be so absorbed in their message that he exists

the Chanukah lights are recounting...³¹

KIDS – ASK ABOUT CHANUKAH

- Children should ask their parents or older siblings to tell them what the Chanukah lights are saying; they should ask to be told more and more each night of Chanukah – and ideally, during the days as well.³²

TELL THEM OF CHANUKAH AND JEWISH HISTORY

- The children should be told all about Chanukah as well as matters concerning Judaism in general – various stories from our

“only” for the purpose of receiving the message (“to view them”)]. (Parshas Mikeitz 5749; Hisva’aduyos p.77, footnote 84)

31. 28th of Kislev 5749, in an address to the worldwide Jewish children’s organization, Tzivos Hashem (Hisva’aduyos p.62).

Implement their message

We “listen” to the message of the lights in order to apply it to our divine service ... into actuality – “the main thing is the deed.” (26th of Kislev 5749; Hisva’aduyos p.47)

They’re addressing you

[See there at length, where the Rebbe explains that the message told by the lights is not restricted to the contents of the lengthy Al HaNisim prayer (for that text is connected with the *prayer service* of Chanukah and not the candle lighting, and is in fact recited during Ma’ariv of the 1st night, which *precedes* the first lighting at home; the synagogue Menorah does not exempt an individual from lighting at home).

Rather, the flames tell a message that inspires positive action on the part of each man, woman and child. Further, they impart a new message each day; this is reflected in the additional light and the unique Torah reading for each day of Chanukah – both of which impart instruction for each of us. (See there for an example of the second day’s message.)]

32. **A Chanukah request**

When each boy or girl will arrive home [from this gathering], they will tell their father and mother that they were just in Shul, where they joined in with many other Jewish children (and adults too), and together they shouted “Amen!” and “Baruch Hu u’Varuch Shmo!” and then watched the Menorah lighting.

Now that he is home, he is going to light his very own Menorah (even though he may not be Bar Mitzvah yet). At the very least, his father will light the Menorah while he watches. Therefore, he has a special request from his parents:

There’s always more

In addition to what he already knows about Chanukah based on what he saw written in the Siddur, heard from his teacher, Rosh Yeshivah, or friends, he has no doubt that his father or mother know some extra stories – *exciting* stories – about Chanukah.

Tell me a story

He is therefore begging them to tell him some of these stories tonight and also on the remaining nights of Chanukah... (28th of Kislev 5749, in an address to Tzivos Hashem; Hisva’aduyos p.62)

people's history, which portray the theme that despite our being "the smallest of all nations," G-d has nevertheless chosen us over all others and given us His Torah and Mitzvos.³³

Two Proposals

INTRODUCTION

In 5748 (1988), the Rebbe spoke at great length about the dismal state of Jewish education worldwide³⁴ and how we should fully utilize every opportunity to correct the situation.

The theme of providing a proper Jewish education is intrinsically woven into the fabric of Chanukah, and during Chanukah of that year, the Rebbe encouraged all children to ask their parents about the message of Chanukah, and all parents to respond in kind.

The Rebbe set out two "proposals"; one regarding each child lighting a Menorah and having it placed by his own room, the other concerning the distribution of "Chanukah Gelt" (money),³⁵ as explained below.

33. Inspire action

Parents should also explain (as we discussed earlier) that on each day there should be an addition to "the flame of Mitzvos and the light of Torah" – our Torah study and Mitzvah performance. Moreover, this addition should be done with enthusiasm, energy, joy and in such a delightful way (Yiddish: Un in aza min geshmaken oifen) that he will continue to increase "the flame of Mitzvos and the light of Torah" even *after* Chanukah – without the need for further prompting. (ibid.)

34. The war for Jewish Ed. needs you

Both in the Diaspora and in the Land of Israel ... there are hundreds of thousands of Jewish children who have no clue whatsoever about Judaism, Torah and Mitzvos. The call of the hour for every single Jew is to strive to the best of their ability – and *beyond* – to educate Jewish children in the spirit of Torah and Mitzvos. (Parshas Vayeishev 5748; Hisva'aduyos p.64) See there at length, p.74-79.

35. Sweetening the start

The custom of "Chanukah Gelt" has to do with education.

[As the Rebbe's father, Rabbi Levi Yitzchak Schneersohn explains:] "It is similar to the theme expressed in the verse, 'Educate ('Chaneich') a lad according to his way,' i.e., it is similar to the way we begin a child's education; in the words of the Alter Rebbe [explaining the profusion of sacrifices offered when the Temple and Altar are dedicated], 'When we want to teach him but he is still at a distance from the art of study, we need to train him into it; which is accomplished [at first]

“It is my fervent hope,” the Rebbe declared, “that these proposals – which will undoubtedly be publicized in each and every location – will be accepted gracefully and with joy; the primary concern is that they are actually implemented, for ‘The main thing is the *deed!*’”³⁶

1) Children light their Menorah by their room

PERSONALIZED EDUCATION

- Children should light their own Menorahs and leave them at the entrance to their rooms (which constitutes their personal mini-Beis HaMikdash³⁷). This will certainly enhance their education; when children see *their* Chanukah Menorah positioned at the

through supplying him with many gifts...’). Chanukah is when Torah [study and observance] began anew following [the annulment of] the decrees of the Greeks, who desired ‘to make them forget Your Torah and violate the decrees of Your Will.’ When we educate a child, we do so by throwing money at him...” (ibid, p.65)

36. Ibid p.68.

Urgent action

Due to the great importance of this matter, we cannot rely on the Shabbos Farbrengen to publicize it; we must discuss it now, during this weekday Farbrengen, where technical modes of communication are available and active, so that these words are being heard in other locations, in additional countries, on an international scale – and even in Eretz Yisrael.

All this is needed to ensure that each individual, wherever he may be, will immediately begin engaging in the said activity; the more and the quicker, the better!

May each person act on these words of arousal ... and also add more on their own initiative... (Yud Tes Kislev 5748; Hisva’aduyos p.50)

37. **A child’s room is his Mikdash**

We have discussed at great length regarding the proposal that each Jewish person, both young and old, turn their private homes into a “mini-Beis HaMikdash” (Mikdash Me’at); a house of Torah study, prayer and acts of kindness [just as the Beis HaMikdash included (1) the Ark containing the Luchos and Moshe’s Torah scroll; (2) the sacrificial services; and (3) charity boxes].

This proposal is especially directed to Jewish *children*; they should turn their private bedrooms into a mini-Beis Hamikdash, through keeping a Siddur (the mode of prayer), a Chumash (the mode of Torah study) and a Tzedakah box (acts of kindness) in their rooms. The child should then pray from the Siddur, study from the Chumash and give Tzedakah each day (except Shabbos, when Tzedakah may not be given; a double portion should instead be given on *Erev* Shabbos).

As a sequel to the above proposal, it would be very worthwhile and fitting for each child’s Menorah to be placed at the entrance to their rooms, and that they should light it there. (Parshas Vayeishev 5748; Hisva’aduyos p.64)

entrance to *their* room, it will make a powerful impression on their souls.³⁸

WHY QUESTION?

- “Many questions have been asked regarding this practice.³⁹

Must *every* child light a Menorah?⁴⁰ Must we light in *every* child’s room or is one room enough? Should *girls* light as well as the boys?

In reply, our guiding principle must be that] we should 1) examine the activity in question and determine its *practical* outcome and then 2) do whatever will have the most *positive* effect on the children’s education.”⁴¹

38. **Affect child and room**

This will cause a positive addition to the children themselves ... as well as to their rooms, their “mini-Beis HaMikdash.” The effect on the room is a similar concept (and an allusion to) the dedication of the Beis HaMikdash which took place on Chanukah. (ibid.)

Boys and girls

A Menorah should also be lit in boys and girls’ rooms; it makes a strong impression not only on the children, but also on their parents and on whoever happens to enter the house. (Yechidus on the 14th of Kislev 5748; Hisva’aduyos p.91)

39. **Golus protests:**

A peculiar question has been put forward, “How can we light the Menorah in the *bedroom*? The Gemara and Shulchan Aruch clearly rule that the time for lighting the Menorah is while the household are still awake – and *not* when they are already sleeping; so why on earth should we light by the children’s *bedrooms*?!”

This question stems from the dark influences of Exile and the like; if people would stop to think for just a moment, they would immediately realize how ridiculous their question is...

Geulah responds:

... A child’s room is not a “bedroom”; besides sleeping there, the child also uses the room for all their needs, including the important activities of studying Torah, praying and giving Tzedakah, as we have discussed many times. A child’s room should be a “mini-Beis HaMikdash.” (Parshas Mikeitz 5748; Hisva’aduyos p.133) [The Rebbe continues with a lesson we could learn from this discussion, regarding sanctifying even our sleep.]

40. Note: Many Jews have the custom that their young children also kindle the Chanukah lights (Parshas Vayitzei 5751, footnote 110).

41. **The benefits are real**

All Mitzvos have a practical consequence; the specific purpose for kindling the Menorah in the children’s rooms is to further publicize the miracle of Chanukah and have a positive influence on the children’s education.

That being the case, we should determine the best way to express this purpose – in the most *effective* manner. (Yechidus on 24th of Kislev 5748; Hisva’aduyos p.91)

[As stated earlier, having each child light their own Menorah by the entrance to their rooms will *certainly* enhance their education.]

EXPLAIN THE SIGNIFICANCE

- At the same time, we should make sure to explain to the children – in terms they understand – the meaning and significance behind the activity of lighting the Menorah⁴².

2) Distributing “Chanukah Gelt”

CUSTOM OF THE REBBEIM

- It is customary (and a Jewish custom is considered part of *Torah*) to give children “Chanukah Gelt” – specifically giving them *money*.⁴³ All the Rebbe of Chabad would hand out “Chanukah Gelt” on the fourth or fifth night of Chanukah; the Previous Rebbe would give “Gelt” to his children even after their marriage, and would also give to his sons-in-law.⁴⁴

EVERY DAY

- To further advance education, we should promote the giving of “Chanukah Gelt”⁴⁵ on *every day* of Chanukah (or at least, on two of the days⁴⁶).⁴⁷

[The Rebbe concludes by stating that this practice brings added purity to the children, which in turn serves as a preparation for the added purity that will arrive with the future Redemption.]

42. Parshas Vayeishev 5748; Hisva’aduyos p.64.

Never too old

Many households have the custom to give “Chanukah Gelt” to the grown sons and daughters as well. (Yechidus on 24th of Kislev 5748; Hisva’aduyos p.90)

43. **Chance to hasten Geulah**

It is customary to give children money – specifically money – on Chanukah. With this, they may procure their essential needs or whatever their heart’s desire, as well as – most importantly – they can donate to Tzedakah, thereby hastening the coming of the Redemption. (Yechidus on 27th of Kislev 5751; Hisva’aduyos p.48)

44. Parshas Vayeishev 5748; Hisva’aduyos p.64.

Never too old

Many households have the custom to give “Chanukah Gelt” to the grown sons and daughters as well. (Yechidus on 24th of Kislev 5748; Hisva’aduyos p.90)

45. **Who doesn’t want happy kids?**

Particularly since the parents themselves also desire (by their very nature as parents) to give their children the pleasure of receiving “Chanukah Gelt.” (Parshas Vayeishev 5750; Hisva’aduyos p.51) See also Address to Tzivos Hashem on 28th of Kislev 5750 (Hisva’aduyos p.63).

46. Ibid, p.51 and 63 respectively.

SO THEY WILL HEIGHTEN THEIR EFFORTS

- We should explain to the children that they are being given this money in order that they should study more Torah and so forth.⁴⁸

MAKE UP FOR SHABBOS ON EREV SHABBOS OR SUNDAY

- We do *not* give “Chanukah Gelt” on Shabbos; not even via a permissible object [that will be exchanged for money following Shabbos].⁴⁹ Rather, we should make up for it on either Erev Shabbos⁵⁰ or Sunday.⁵¹ [Regarding Motzei Shabbos, see footnote 52].

Add days

This year, we should add to the custom of giving “Chanukah Gelt,” both in the amounts we distribute and in the number of days in which “Gelt” is given. Although in the past, each person had their own custom of distributing “Chanukah Gelt” on specific days of Chanukah, they should now give on *additional* days. The sooner, the better! (Parshas Vayeishev, Erev Chanukah 5749; Hisva’aduyos p.34-35)

All eight

Although the plain custom is to give “Chanukah Gelt” on one or two nights of Chanukah, nevertheless, since this year is a year of “Tisamach,” “rejoicing” (the word spelled by the Hebrew date “5748”) and it is also a year of Hakhel, let us give “Gelt” on *all eight nights* of Chanukah. It will certainly have a most beneficial and influential effect on the children’s Torah education. (24th of Kislev 5748; Hisva’aduyos p.91)

47. Parshas Vayeishev 5748; Hisva’aduyos p.65.

48. Ibid.

Never too old

Many households have the custom to give “Chanukah Gelt” to the grown sons and daughters as well. (Yechidus on 24th of Kislev 5748; Hisva’aduyos p.90)

49. Parshas Vayeishev 5750; Hisva’aduyos p.51.

50. Address to Tzivos Hashem on 28th of Kislev 5750; Hisva’aduyos p.63.

51. Parshas Vayeishev 5748; Hisva’aduyos p.65.

52. [Many avoid handling money on Motzei Shabbos. In the first Sichah quoted below (from 5748), the Rebbe suggests simply *discussing* giving “Chanukah Gelt” on Motzei Shabbos Chanukah. In the second Sichah (5749), the Rebbe seems to wish altogether avoiding anything that resembles dealing with money.]

Talk now, pay later

Obvious, we should also give “Chanukah Gelt” in connection with Shabbos – just as we light the Menorah on Erev Shabbos [for Shabbos Chanukah]. In the same way, we should give “Chanukah Gelt” on Motzei Shabbos, at the time of lighting “Sunday’s” Menorah.

Some have the custom not to give money on Motzei Shabbos; here, however, we are dealing with a *Mitzvah* that influences the children’s education – we are at least able to *discuss* giving the money on Motzei Shabbos – and then actually give it on Sunday morning after daybreak or sunrise. (Yechidus on 24th of Kislev 5748; Hisva’aduyos p.91)

Postponement bonus

This year, the first night of Chanukah coincides with Motzei Shabbos; it would be

EXTRA ON FOURTH AND FIFTH NIGHTS

- [We should give “Gelt” on *every* night of Chanukah.] Nevertheless, in order to uphold the custom of the Chanad Rebbes to give “Gelt” specifically on the fourth or fifth night of Chanukah, we should double or triple the amount of “Gelt” we give on those nights.⁵³

MAKE IT WORTH WAITING FOR

- “Chanukah Gelt” should cause the child joy – enough joy so that despite *all* of Chanukah being “days of joy” (as Rambam states), there will nevertheless be a clearly recognizable *increase* in the child’s joy as a result of receiving “Chanukah Gelt.”⁵⁴

SANCTIFYING MONEY

- We should distribute “Chanukah Gelt” with fanfare and in ample measure; besides making the children happy by following

worthwhile to refrain from distributing “Chanukah Gelt” on Motzei Shabbos, so as to avoid the questions involved in handling money prior to Havdalah and so forth. It would be better to give extra “Chanukah Gelt” on the *second* night of Chanukah (Sunday) instead.

When we tell the children that they will be receiving their Shabbos “Chanukah Gelt” tomorrow instead of tonight – accompanied by an *addition* to the amount they receive annually, then they will certainly have no complaints about their “Chanukah Gelt” being postponed from the first night to the second. (23rd of Kislev 5749; Hisva’aduyos p.23-24)

53. **Why did they limit it to two nights?**

If the custom of the Rebbes was to limit “Chanukah Gelt” to the fourth or fifth night of Chanukah, why, then, should we expand their custom and distribute “Gelt” on every night?

However, the reason for their not giving “Chanukah Gelt” every night is that, since this practice is meant to educate the children, then by repeating it every single night, it loses its novelty and no longer elicits such a great reaction.

Anti-Golus Gelt

Nevertheless, due to the intensification of the darkness of Exile, which has particularly affected the state of [Jewish children’s] education, we are forced to add in our counter-measures and produce an abundance of radiance and holiness. We are therefore required to expand the custom of “Chanukah Gelt,” and instead of giving just once in accordance with the traditional custom, we should distribute it *every* day of Chanukah.

A simple solution

At the same time, in order to preserve the Rebbes’ custom to give “Gelt” on only the fourth or fifth night, and yet to avoid losing the novelty of those nights, I suggest that we double or triple the amount of “Gelt” on those nights. (Parshas Vayeishev 5748; Hisva’aduyos p.65-66)

54. 8th day of Chanukah 5752; Sichos Kodesh p.474.

this practice,⁵⁵ we also strengthen our connection with the Rebbes of Chabad.⁵⁶

WHOLE FAMILY GIVES GELT

- It is customary for children to receive “Chanukah Gelt” from as many people as possible; not only from their father, but from other family members as well.⁵⁷

SO THEY SHOULD GIVE MORE TZEDAKAH

- The idea behind giving “Gelt” is to provide the children with an opportunity to increase in giving Tzedakah.⁵⁸

55. **Make it worth the wait**

We should perform this custom in the proper manner; this includes giving a fitting sum, enough to make the children excited, so that it will create a strong impression on other children who have *not* yet received “Chanukah Gelt” (when they hear that their friends have already received their “Gelt” or that it was at least already promised to them).

Our addition to this custom should also cause an addition in all other areas of Torah and Mitzvos, and in all other Jewish customs. (Parshas Vayeitzei 5752; Sichos Kodesh p.380)

56. **One good custom deserves another**

Strengthening our connection with the Rebbeim in turn provides us with additional ability to make their teachings, instructions and customs permeate our personal day-to-day lives. This certainly includes the custom that has recently spread (in an ever-increasing measure) to study Torah topics concerning Moshiach and the Redemption – in order to prepare ourselves (and others as well) for the revelation of the true and complete Redemption. (ibid, p.355-356)

57. 27th of Kislev 5751; Hisva’aduyos p.48.

58. **A Jewish kid needs money?**

When we give the children this money, it is theirs to do with as they please, it is nevertheless understood that this extra money – more than they guessed they would receive – is so that they may give more Tzedakah; *what else does a Jewish child really need money for?*

... After all, he is supported by his parents; his father (in most cases) earns the money and his mother uses it to buy him all his necessities ... he has food to eat, clothes to wear, certainly a house to live in and find shelter and even holy books to study from and so forth.

It is clear that the main use of this money is for performing those Mitzvos that require money – specifically Tzedakah.

Especially *nowadays*; the Alter Rebbe states in Tanya that although the required minimum for Tzedakah is one tenth of our income, while the maximum is a fifth, nowadays, however, in order to completely eradicate the Yetzer HaRah (evil inclination) which is the scourge that plagues us in Exile (may the Merciful One save us), we should donate much more than a fifth – to cast off sin and redeem our soul ... from untoward matters, via performing an abundance of Mitzvos, starting with distributing Tzedakah profusely. (28th of Kislev 5749; Hisva’aduyos p.63-64)

TRAIN AND TRUST THEM

- We should explain to the children that we are giving this money into *their* hands, to do with as *they* see fit, and we trust that they will use it in the proper way,⁵⁹ and that they will undoubtedly give some of it to Tzedakah on their own.⁶⁰

Mitzvah to Publicize the Miracle

SPEAK ABOUT CHANUKAH AFTER LIGHTING MENORAH

- [In 1988 (a year of Hakhel), following the Menorah lighting in 770, the Rebbe instructed:] After lighting the Menorah and singing “HaNeiros Halalu” or another liturgical poem as is customary in many [non-Chabad] congregations, we should continue to publicize the Chanukah miracle by speaking about Chanukah.⁶¹

59. Chanukah and Tzedakah

The money is theirs; however, we trust that they will use the money in a manner befitting a Jewish child – and befitting the festival of Chanukah, which affects the entire year.

In addition to the children using the money for their own needs, whether mundane or holy, they will undoubtedly recall the commandment “You should love your fellow Jew as yourself” and give a portion of their money to Tzedakah.

This is especially important in light of the Chassidic discourses (particularly in those of the Tzemech Tzedek that are printed in Or HaTorah) that explain how the concept of Tzedakah is uniquely bound with Chanukah. (Night of 23rd of Kislev 5749; Hisva’aduyos, p. 23)

Donating to the Beis HaMikdash

Certainly, the children will use the money to enhance their personal “Beis HaMikdash,” i.e., their individual homes and rooms. (Parshas Mikeitz 5750; Hisva’aduyos p.91)

We educate them by placing money into their jurisdiction and allowing them to use a large portion of it for Tzedakah purposes and Mitzvos in general.

May it be Hashem’s Will, that they will immediately be able to use this money to donate to the Third Beis HaMikdash; the donations to the Mishkan in the Sinai Desert were donated by men, women and children – they were *all* obligated to donate. The same will apply to the Third Beis HaMikdash. (Yechidus on 27th of Kislev 5751; Hisva’aduyos p.48)

60. A Jew know what to do with extra Gelt

We should explain and *emphasize* to the children, that the money is being placed into their jurisdiction and becomes *theirs* – in order that they could use it according to the dictates of their heart, which is a *Jewish* heart. Certainly, then, they will donate to Tzedakah of their own accord. (Parshas Vayeishev 5749; Hisva’aduyos p.34-35)

61. Now that you have their attention...

According to Halachah, we fulfill our obligation to publicize the miracle of

EIGHT UNIQUE MESSAGES

- Each day, we should speak not only about the general virtue of Chanukah, but also of the unique importance of the *present* day of Chanukah over all others; this superiority of each new day is reflected in the new number of candles lit that night and the specific Torah reading for that day.⁶²

FARBRENGENS AND CHANUKAH PARTIES

- On every day of Chanukah, there should be a Chasidic Farbrengen – or whatever other name the event is given depending on local conditions (in the spirit of our Sages’ teaching, “When you go to a city, follow its customs”). At these events, we should speak words of Torah and make positive resolutions. This should be done in every location, in a manner tailored to that particular place.⁶³

ACKNOWLEDGE MODERN MIRACLES

- It is most important that at these events we publicize all of the miracles that Hashem does for the Jewish people, both “in those days,” as well as “in our times.”⁶⁴ Know that publicizing the

Chanukah simply by lighting the Menorah.

... Nevertheless, we can further publicize the miracle by speaking about it.

... After all, since everyone has gathered together to light the Menorah, we might as well use the opportunity to further publicize the miracle and discuss Chanukah – especially since during this year of Hakhel and year of joy (“Tisamach”). (1st day of Chanukah 5748; Hisva'aduyos, p. 98)

62. Chanukah 5748; Hisva'aduyos, p. 100.

63. Parshas Vayeishev 5752; Hisva'aduyos, p. 408-9.

Unforgettable events

We should hold Grand Chassidisher Farbrengens each day of Chanukah; they should be held in the best possible way – the most profound, broad and great Farbrengens – with joy and gladness of heart.

Call it what you like

For those who are alarmed by the word “Farbrengen” – it truly doesn’t matter what name we give the event. The main thing is the *deed*; that many Jews get together, speak words of Torah and are aroused to increase in Torah, Mitzvos and the dissemination of Judaism – all this in addition to the many Mitzvos we do just by being at a “Farbrengen”... (Parshas Vayeishev 5752; Sichos Kodesh p.429)

64. **Since when must we publicize miracles?**

One of the Chassidim may protest this directive, claiming that he was educated to devote himself exclusively and entirely to the study of Torah; he has no time whatsoever for other matters – including “miracles,” which mean absolutely nothing to him...

The answer to that is twofold: Firstly, we are obligated to acknowledge and thank Hashem for the miracles He performs. Secondly, it is almost Chanukah, when we are obliged to “publicize the miracle” (“Pirumei Nisa”); even if during the rest of

miracles that Hashem performs nowadays helps to bring the Redemption in actuality.⁶⁵

“LATKES AVENT”

- It was the custom of the Rebbe of Chabad to hold a kind of “Farbrengen” with their immediate household on one of the nights of Chanukah. We should also make family gatherings during Chanukah (at which we should also distribute “Gelt”).⁶⁶

CHANUKAH GATHERINGS IN SCHOOLS

- It would be worthwhile to hold Chanukah gatherings in the schools (in the way that best fits each school’s specific conditions) in order to encourage the children and enhance their education. We should speak to them about Chanukah and help them make good resolutions to advance their Torah study, prayer and acts of kindness. We should also distribute “Chanukah “Gelt” there.⁶⁷

OFFICES, HOSTIPALS, ETC.

- We should especially hold Chanukah parties in places of work where the nature of the occupation requires the employees to remain

the year one might suggest that we need not place such emphasis on publicizing miracles ... during Chanukah, however, we should certainly engage in active publicity. (ibid, Hisva’aduyos p.408)

65. Parshas Yayeishev 5752; Hisva’aduyos p.408-409.

For the lack of gratitude

Publicizing Hashem’s miracles is important for bringing Moshiach; as the Gemara relates, “Hashem wished to make King Chizkiyahu into the Moshiach ... but the supernal attribute of judgment protested: Master of the Universe! Look, if David, King of Israel – who recited numerous songs and praises before You – was nevertheless not made into the Moshiach; then should Chizkiyahu – for whom You have performed all these miracles, yet he failed to recite a song [of gratitude] before You – be made into the Moshiach?!”

In other words, despite King Chizkiyahu being on the level where Hashem thought to make him Moshiach, nevertheless, for failing to pay complete attention to the miracles that Hashem wrought on his behalf (i.e., he certainly paid attention to them, but failed to take it to heart as befits a man of his caliber) – for that reason alone, he lost the merit of having the Redemption occur in his lifetime and of himself being the Moshiach...

In our case, in addition to the clear requirement to show gratitude for the miracles Hashem performs on our behalf – for which we should openly thank Him – another fundamental factor comes into play:

Showing gratitude and publicizing His miracles is extremely important for hastening the coming of Moshiach. (Sichos Kodesh 5752, Vol.2, p.428)

66. Parshas Yayeishev 5749; Hisva’aduyos, p.35).

67. Ibid; see also Night of 23rd of Kislev; Hisva’aduyos p.24.

in a specific location, such as offices, hospitals and the like. At these events, we should distribute “Chanukah Gelt.”⁶⁷

Illuminate the dark

INTRODUCTION

Chanukah gives us the power to positively influence and brighten our surroundings. For that reason, we specifically light the Menorah when night descends and position it to face the public domain, “outside the entrance to one’s home.” All this symbolizes our power to radiate the warmth of holiness and goodness, and the light of Torah and Mitzvos, into places that are yet “dark” to these matters.

SHARE WHATEVER YOU HAVE

- We should take a lesson from the Chanukah lights, which, in man’s divine service, represent an individual or a family’s spiritual journey or “education” (“Chinuch”). On the first night of Chanukah – the very outset of our journey – we kindle just one solitary light, which constitutes the very basic minimum. Nevertheless, we already become sources of positive influence to others; we specifically position our solitary light where it will illuminate the darkness beyond our homes.⁶⁸

68. Shouldn’t we take it easy?

One may protest: Why, the Chanukah lights are a proof that our spiritual service must advance in steady steps, beginning with the easier tasks and gradually advancing to the more challenging; first let me illuminate my own household with Torah’s light, and only then will I tackle the great darkness beyond my home.

If you have, you give

However, the Chanukah lights themselves disagree with this logic: True, as far as *amount* of light – the number of lit lamps – we should start from the beginning and systematically increase the light. Nevertheless, when it comes to *positioning* that radiance, we are required to place it where it will also dispel the darkness beyond our homes.

How could I take on the world?

... This prompts further protest: Granted that that is the true lesson of Chanukah – but since when do we have the power to light up the outside world?! After all, all we have so far is a “solitary flame”!

You are Hashem’s Shaliach

The answer is simple: You are correct in assuming that your own human powers – which are inherently limited – are insufficient to accomplish such a great task.

ILLUMINATE PERSONAL AFFAIRS

- We should begin our task to illuminate the darkened “outside” domain by first treating our own “exterior” aspects; illuminate your external affairs and dealings, so that “*all* of your affairs are done only for the sake of Heaven” and train yourself to “know Hashem in *all* your ways.”⁶⁹

SPREAD LIGHT EVERYWHERE

- When we encounter matters that require us to simply “turn aside from evil” [without engaging it], we should nevertheless do all we can – in a manner that is permissible according to the Shulchan Aruch – to fill even such matters with a useful and meritorious purpose.⁶⁹

STUDY WITH AND EDUCATE YOUR OWN CHILDREN

- Not only should we strengthen our bond with our sons and daughters through studying Torah with them, but we should also educate them in more “external” areas, i.e., matters that concern Judaism in general. Included in this move is educating our sons and daughters who are under the age of Bar/Bas Mitzvah in all of the other Mitzvos of Chanukah as well.⁷⁰

However, you are to use the power of the Chanukah lights, i.e., the power of a Mitzvah given to us by Hashem Himself!

Parenthetically, this reply holds true for the many other tasks that face a Jew, which are also difficult to fulfill within the framework of the natural world and its society. A Jew’s very being, particularly when he observes Hashem’s commandments, gives him the power to accomplish what the world defines as extremely difficult or even contradictory. (Parshas Miketz 5748; Hisva’aduyos p.126-127) See there at length.

69. Parshas Vayeishev 5750; Hisva’aduyos p.51.

70. **Yehudis**

Not only were woman and children included in the miraculous salvation of Chanukah, but, in fact, the central miracle came about through the actions of a woman [Yehudis]. (ibid.)

Sanctifying money

Included in our task of illuminating our surroundings, i.e., any matter that is not entirely spiritual, is observing the Rebbeim’s custom of distributing “Chanukah Gelt” to children. We should not assume that because our main connection to the children is through teaching them Torah, the observance of some custom is not really important. Rather, the Chanukah lights [which shine into the darkened public domain] inform us that we should also illuminate matters that are not entirely spiritual. (ibid.)

VICTORY IN OUTREACH⁷¹

- One of the fundamental lessons of Chanukah is that even where success appears extremely doubtful, we should nevertheless exert great effort towards attaining our goal. During Chanukah, we should reach out – wherever we can – to Jews who, for various peculiar reasons, find themselves “in the dark” and “outside” of matters of Judaism.⁷²

A MENORAH IN EVERY HOME

- We should see to it that a Menorah is lit in every Jewish home.⁷³

PUBLIC LIGHTINGS

- As we have discussed [profusely] in previous years, we should arrange for communal Menorah lightings in public places, to further publicize the miracle of Chanukah.⁷³

EVERY JEW A GLEAMING GOLDEN BRANCH

- We should explain to every Jew, no matter who they are or in what situation they may be, that they are an indispensable part of the “Golden Menorah” [of collective Jewry]; they should therefore

71. Double last year’s success

Add with ever greater vigor in all aspects and every detail of the Chanukah awareness campaign (as we have discussed at length in past years). May you have much success – far beyond your expectations and beyond last year’s success; after all, when we saw our outstanding achievements last year, we were amazed at ourselves for not having grabbed the opportunity to accomplish on such a scale in previous years. Certainly, then, we will add yet further in this year’s campaign, building on what we have learnt so far... (Parshas Miketz 5751; Hisva’aduyos p.71)

Organizing the campaign does not really require such great efforts; we can simply examine the records and reports of previous years in order to see how to go about it. We should include additional places in this year’s campaign. (Roshei Devarim to ibid.)

72. Night of 23rd Kislev 5749; Hisva’aduyos p.22.**Here or there?**

There is room for debate: Where should we place our greatest efforts; does the sanctity of Eretz Yisrael deserve our greater focus, or does the Diaspora’s lack of sanctity demand heightened attention?

What a great waste, though, to while away the time on such a debate, when we could meanwhile be actively giving *both* places our full attention by conducting a powerful, highly-charged Chanukah campaign both in the Holy Land and in the Diaspora... (Parshas Miketz 5749; Hisva’aduyos p.84)

73. Parshas Vayeishev 5748; Hisva’aduyos, p. 64.

stand tall and proud of their Judaism – and certainly not be embarrassed of their Jewishness, G-d Forbid. To the contrary; they should take pride in being Jewish and display this openly in their daily life by living according to Torah.⁷⁴

WOMEN ILLUMINATE THEIR FAMILIES

- We should explain the idea of Chanukah to women in a way that will influence them in their unique role as mainstay of the Jewish home; the spirit of Chanukah should permeate all of their various efforts in the home.⁷⁵

HAFATZAH – GIVE THE GLOBE A G-DLY GLOW

- We should use Chanukah to light up the entire world. Both Israel and the Diaspora, from one end of the earth to the other, the globe should radiate with the physical lights of Chanukah and the spiritual illumination of “the flame of Mitzvos and the light of Torah” – fueled by the Torah’s “oil,” the teachings of Chassidus.⁷⁶

SHEVA MITZVOS – RIGHTEOUS GENTILES

The Sages instituted the kindling of the Chanukah lights “outside the entrance to the home” at dusk, a time “when the feet of the ‘Tarmudai’ have ceased from the marketplace.”

“Tarmudai” has two meanings: Literally, we are to light the Menorah at dusk, when the last group of “merchants” would leave the market and return home; homiletically, we are to illuminate the darkness to the extent that the “rebellious ones” will have ceased, having been influenced by the Torah’s light.

- This instruction should be applied in a broader sense:

We should use Chanukah to influence non-Jews to keep the Seven

74. Long life lamps

Our ability to illuminate the world comes from the Grand Menorah in the Beis HaMikdash. We may find ourselves in Exile at present, and lack both Beis HaMikdash as well as its Menorah – nevertheless, the influence of the Menorah lights that were kindled in the Second Beis HaMikdash all those years ago [following our Chanukah victory over the Greeks] still shines strong till this very day. (Night after 20th of Kislev 5749; Hisva'aduyos)

75. Night of 23rd of Kislev 5749; Hisva'aduyos, p. 23.

76. Parshas Miketz 5749; Hisva'aduyos, p. 77.

Noahide Laws – so that even those non-Jews who as of now can be considered the “Turmedai” will also undergo a positive transformation.⁷⁷

UNITE ALL JEWRY IN PREPARING FOR GEULAH

- We should prepare for the true and complete Redemption; in the words of the Previous Rebbe, “Stand prepared, all of you, together!”
- [During the one-day festival of Yud Tes Kislev, this directive held a more individually orientated application.] During Chanukah, however – which spans *eight* days – the directive to “stand prepared, all of you, together” should be fulfilled in its *collective* application (a number of days are required when dealing with the public⁷⁸): All of Jewry should stand together in preparation for the Redemption.⁷⁹

77. Parshas Vayeishev 5752; Hisva'aduyos, p. 52.

78. **Days of heightened influence**

There are specific dates that are extremely auspicious for particular matters – although we are able and required to engage in those matters during the rest of the year as well.

(... On the lighter side, for example: When one wishes to personally influence a group of people to unite in preparation for the Geulah, he may well be challenged with, “Who do you think you are?! *So-and-so* should be in charge of such concerns; not you!” The solution is to stretch the activities over a number of days, so that another member of the group can act “leader” each day...!) (Parshas Vayishlach, 17th Kislev 5749; Hisva'aduyos, p.444)

79. Parshas Vayeishev 5752; Hisva'aduyos, p.52.

מוקדש
לכ"ק אדמו"ר מלך המשיח



לעילוי נשמת
הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' **יעקב זלמן חיים** ב"ר אברהם
מרדכי לוי יצחק **סעמיועלס**
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לזכות
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