Selected Laws and Customs of Chanukah 5787

Candle Lighting

Chanukah lights are kindled each of the eight nights of the holiday to publicize the miracles of Chanukah. Some are meticulous to only light with olive oil, which exudes a clear light when burned, and recalls the miracle of the oil. Others prefer to use candles, which radiate a larger flame.

Where to Light

One should situate their menorah in a window facing the street, so that others will be able to see the lights. If this is not possible, one may place the menorah on a table where household members will see it.

How to Light

The Ashkenazic custom is for each member of the household to light their own menorah. Place the candles into the menorah starting from the right. Each night add an additional candle to the left. Using the *shamash*, light the newest candle first, from left to right.

Chanukah candle lighting may be found on page 897 of the Koren siddur.

Before lighting say:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹקינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שֶׁל חֲנֻכָּה.

Baruch atah adonai eloheinu melech ha'olam asher kideshanu bemitzvotav vetzivanu lehadlik ner shel chanukah.

Blessed are You Lord our God Sovereign of the universe Who has sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us to kindle the Chanukah lights.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹקינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שֶׁעָשָׂה נִסִּים לַאֲבוֹתֵינוּ בַּיָּמִים הָהֵם בַּזְּמַן הַזֶּה.

Baruch atah adonai eloheinu melech ha'olam she'asah nisim la'avoteinu bayamim haheim bazeman hazeh.

Blessed are You Lord our God Sovereign of the universe Who has wrought miracles for our forefathers in those days at this season.

On the first night add:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹקינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שֶׁהֶחֱיָנוּ וְקִיְּמָנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לַזְּמַן הַזֶּה.

Baruch atah adonai eloheinu melech ha'olam shehecheyanu vekiyemanu vehigiyanu lazeman hazeh.

Blessed are You Lord our God Sovereign of the universe Who has kept us alive, sustained us, and brought us to this season.

After lighting, say *Hanerot Halalu* (page 899). Many then sing *Mo'az Tzur*.

When to Light
On weekdays the Chanukah lights should be kindled at nightfall (*tzeit hakochavim)*, about 5:03 pm in St. Louis Park. There should be enough oil, or the candles should be long enough, for the lights to burn for at least a half hour after nightfall. This ensures that there is ample time for passersby to see the lights.

If one is unable to return home to light at the proper time, one may light throughout the night, as long as there are still people out and about who are able to see the Chanukah lights, or household members are still awake and can see the lights.

Although the ideal time to light is at nightfall, many families find it meaningful to wait until everyone is home and light together. As long as people are around to see the lights, this is a proper practice.

On Fridays, kindle the Chanukah lights before lighting the Shabbat candles. Shabbat candle lighting is at 4:14 p.m. on Friday, December 4, and 4:13 p.m. on Friday, December 11. Just as on weekdays, the Chanukah lights must burn for at least a half hour after nightfall. Since the lights are kindled significantly earlier on Friday, care must be taken to ensure that there is enough oil, or the candles are long enough, to last for at least an hour and a half.

On Saturday night, first recite *havdalah*, and then kindle the Chanukah lights.

<u>Hallel</u>
Full *hallel* is recited at Shacharit on all eight days of Chanukah.

<u>Al Hanisim</u>
Al hanisim is said in the *amidah* and in *birkat hamazon* throughout the holiday. If forgotten, one does not repeat the *amidah* or *birkat hamazon*.

<u>Special Foods</u>
Unlike Purim, there is no technical requirement on Chanukah to participate in a celebratory meal. However, it is praiseworthy to gather with friends and family on the holiday to celebrate together. Traditional foods include latkes, jelly doughnuts, and other fried delicacies, in commemoration of the miracle of oil. There is also a tradition to consume cheese and other dairy products to commemorate the story of Yehudit.