



Yeshivat Ateret Yerushalayim

IN THE HEART OF THE OLD CITY OF JERUSALEM

From the Teachings of Ha-Rav Shlomo Aviner

Parashat Miketz - Chanukah 5769

Prepared by Rabbi Mordechai Friedfertig

To subscribe, send e-mail to: mororly@bezeqint.net

Would you like to ask Rav Aviner a question? E-mail mororly@bezeqint.net.

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Rav Aviner has a new video blog in which he answers questions of faith and Halachah. It is updated daily.

video.maale.org.il

Hilchot Tzava – Halachot of the Army for Chanukah

Chanukiyah in a field

Question: Should we light the Chanukiyah if we are sleeping in an open field?

Answer: The Meharsham rules that one has to be in a house, even a temporary one, to be obligated to light (Shut Meharsham vol. 4 #146). Ha-Gaon Ha-Rav Eliezer Waldenberg gave a "chiddush" (innovative ruling) that it is permissible to light in a field (Shut Tzitz Eliezer 15:29), but this is a big "chiddush." Therefore, one should not light in a field.

Chanukah lights at a party

Question: Should we kindle Chanukah lights with a blessing at a Chanukah party in the army?

Answer: If the party is in the mess hall, it is like the residence of the soldiers and it is permissible to light with a blessing. But if it is just a hall, one should not recite the blessing. We also light with a blessing in a shul in order to publicize the miracle of Chanukah (Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 671:7), and this would seemingly also apply to a hall, but

the custom is that we only do so in a shul and we do not add to this custom. Thus, if the soldiers are davening minchah or maariv in the hall, it can be considered a shul and it would be permissible to light with a blessing (Yalkut Yosef – Moadim p. 204 note #43 and Hilchot Chanukah of RavHarari p. 98 note #23).

Chanukah lights in a tent

Question: Is there an obligation to light Chanukah lights in an army tent?

Answer: Chanukah lights require a house. A tent is a house. A house does not have to be made of wood and stones; it can also be made of fabric, and a temporary house is also considered a house (Yalkut Yosef – Moadim p. 208). A tent for shelter, however, is not considered a house since it does not have the minimum size of 4 amah by 4 amah (6 feet x 6 feet). It is too small and it cannot function as a house. Therefore, if a soldier is sleeping in a tent for shelter, he is exempt from lighting for Chanukah and he has three options: 1. His family can light for him at home. 2. He can light in the army mess hall. 3. He can light in the army shul.

Chanukah lights with an electric flashlight

Question: When there is no choice, it is permissible to use an electric flashlight for Chanukah lights? For example, in a tent when there is a fear of it lighting on fire.

Answer: Regarding Chanukah lights, an electric flashlight is not considered a light because it does not possess oil or a wick, and it is possible that it does not contain the minimum amount of power that it must be lit (Shut She'eilat Shlomo 1, p. 199). Therefore, if there is a question, do not light at all.

Chanukah lights in a guard house

Question: Should someone on guard duty light in his guard house?

Answer: Yes. It is his temporary residence (Yalkut Yosef – Moadim p. 208). It is also a nice way of publicizing of the miracle.



Ha-Rav answers hundreds of text message questions a week. Some appear in the parashah sheets "Ma'ayanei Ha-Yeshu'ah" and "Olam Ha-Katan." Here's a sample:

Q: Is it permissible to go camping on Chanukah if I am unable to daven with a minyan?

A: The Halachah is that a person must make a strong effort to daven with a minyan, but if he is unable on account of making a livelihood or another reason, he is not obligated. Sometimes taking a trip into nature is an emotional necessity. If so, it is permissible to be lenient.

Q: Is it an obligation to have a silver chanukiyah?

A: The basic mitzvah is that any material is suitable for a chanukiyah, but like all mitzvot, one can embellish the mitzvah (hiddur mitzvah). Therefore, a silver chanukiyah is proper. But the Pele Yoetz writes that even better than what is "proper" is what is "preferable": such as giving the extra money to the poor.

Q: Were the Hasmoneans Ultra-Orthodox or Zionists?

A: It is known that they were God-fearing and also took weapons with self-sacrifice for the sake of the Land of Israel. If so, they were Religious-Zionists...

Q: Can we place a parve dish that was on a dairy table on the table when we are eating meat?

A: Yes, with the condition that you are sure that the dish did not touch the dairy.

Q: Which is preferable – davening with a minyan or davening alone at "Vatikin" (at sunrise)?

A: In a minyan. By the way, if one davens "Vatikin" alone, he must go to a minyan to hear Kaddish, Kedushah, Barechu and the Torah reading.

Q: Is it permissible to bring a Hindu, Indian housekeeper into my house?

A: Yes, just do not bring idol worship in it.

Q: Should a bar mitzvah boy who puts on Tefillin for the first time recite "Shehechyanu"?

A: Yes, according to Maran (our revered teacher) Ha-Rav Kook.

Q: Is putting bars on the windows of a building part of the obligation of "Ma'akeh" (putting a railing around a flat roof so no one falls off – Devarim 22:8)?

A: It is an obligation of not allowing blood in your home (ibid.) if there are small children.

Q: Do we have an obligation to wipe out idol worship in the Land of Israel in our time?

A: Yes, but it is impossible. Shut Ha-Rav Menachem Kasher in the book "Ha-Tekufah Ha-Gedolah."

Q: What is the Torah's approach regarding eating meat?

A: It is permissible to eat kosher meat. Vegetarianism is a future vision. We should now focus on mitzvot between people.

Q: Should I recite "Shehechyanu" on being drafted into Tzahal? When?

A: Yes, when you wear your uniform for the first time.

Q: If I bought a CD can I put it on my MP3?

A: Yes, since you bought it and this is the way you wish to use it.

Q: Is it permissible to play poker on weekdays? On Shabbat?

A: On weekdays for minimal amounts of money and on Shabbat for no money. But it is always a waste of time.

Stories of Rabbenu – Our Rabbi

Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah Ha-Cohain Kook

Birchat Ha-Mazon

Our Rabbi did not recite "Al Naharot Bavel" (By the Rivers of Babylon – Tehillim 137 – usually recited on weekdays) before the blessing after eating, but "Shir Ha-Ma'alot" (A Song of Ascents – Tehillim 126 – usually recited on holidays and happy occasions) at every meal since the Nation of Israel is returning to its Land.

Goy shel Shabbat

Our Rabbi said that we should not be embarrassed about the leniency of the "Goy shel Shabbat" (using a non-Jew in specific situations on Shabbat), and in general we should not question the leniencies of our Sages of the Gemara.

Chanukah

Jerusalem Holiday

Our Rabbi once said to the yeshiva students on Chanukah that one must remember that the holiday of Chanukah is a Jerusalem holiday (Gadol Shimusha p. 120).

Maoz Tzur

When Our Rabbi would sing Maoz Tzur, he would cry during the sad stanzas and would be full of excitement during the joyous stanzas. (Ha-Rav Yehoshua Wiezman)

Chanukiyah

Our Rabbi would light his Chanukiyah inside. (Ha-Rav Aviner)



Shut She'eilat Shlomo - Questions of Jewish Law

Deli roll with a milchig spatula

Question: After we finished cooking a deli roll, I mistakenly took it out of the pan (while no longer in the oven but still hot) with a dairy spatula which had not been used for over two months ago. Is it permitted to eat the deli roll, and what is the status of the spatula?

Answer: The deli roll is kosher but the spatula must be kashered.



Family Matters - Ha-Rav writes weekly for

the parashah sheet "Rosh Yehudi" on family relationships

True Love

My friend told me a children's story about an 80 year old man who came to a doctor's office for a treatment. He requested that they perform the treatment as quickly as possible because he is in a hurry.

During the treatment the nurse asked: "Where are you hurrying off to? Do you have an important doctor's appointment?"

"No, I am eating with my wife in the hospital?"

"What is wrong with her?"

"She has had Alzheimer's for a few years already."

"And if you are a little late, will she worry?"

"No, she does not understand what is happening to her. For the last five years she does not recognize anyone, not even me."

"And you visit her every morning even though she does not know who you are?" – the nurse said surprisingly.

"She does not know who I am," the man said smiling, "But I know who she is and who she was."

Special thank you to Fred Casden for editing the Ateret Yerushalayim Parshah Sheet