

## **From the Bostoner Rebbe**

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## **HALOCHAS OF CHANUKAH**

Chanukah candles, once lit, are prohibited from use. For this reason, there must be another light source in the room. Our Minhag (custom) is to light an additional candle called a Shamash which should be distinguished from the other candles by its position (e.g. higher or lower). Electric light bulbs may not be used in place of oil or candles. It is forbidden to recite the blessings over and electric Menorah.

## **BLESSINGS**

On the first evening, three blessings are made:

1. L'hadlick Ner Shel Chanukah
2. She'oseh Nissim
3. Shehecheyanu

After the first night, the blessing Shehecheyonu is no longer recited.

All the Brochos should be said prior to the actual lighting of the Menorah. Immediately after completion of the Brochos the first candle on your left is lit. Then one should start the Hanayros Hallolu simultaneously completing the lighting.

When away from home - if one is a guest in someone's house for supper or overnight, it is preferable to light the Menorah oneself, as if he were a member of the household. If this is not feasible, he should contribute a token amount of money towards the cost of the candles or oil. This procedure should be followed even when the Menorah is being kindled at his own by his parent or his wife.

## **SPECIAL ADDITIONS TO THE TEFILLAH AND BIRCHAS HAMAZON**

Al Hanisim - All eight days of Chanukah the Al Hanisim is added to all the Amidos (silent standing prayer that is an essential part of prayer) immediately after Modim. During Birchas Hamazon it is added during the second blessing immediately before V'al Hakol.

If one forgets to say the Al Hanisim he does not repeat the Amidah or Barching. If one remembers the omission before the completion of the Birkas Hamazon, he may include it in the Harachamon sequence as follows: Harachamon Who Yaaseh Lonu Nissim K'shem She'osesoh L'avoseynu... B'May Matisyahu...

Hallel - the complete Hallel is recited all eight days after the Amidah of Shacharis.

Torah Reading - On all eight days, selections from the sacrifices of the Nesi'im are read from Bamidbar - Parshas Naso. On Shabbos Chanukah two Torahs are used.

### **ADDITIONAL CUSTOMS**

Because of the important role of Yehudis, the daughter of Yochanan, the Kohain Gadol (High Priest), women have assumed an additional Chanukah custom not applicable to men. According to custom, women refrain from all tasks while the oil or candles in the Menorah are burning.

Since Yehudis prepared a dairy feast for the Greek commanding officer prior to his downfall, it is customary to serve an elegant dairy meal during Chanukah. The potato 'Latke' (pancake) custom is related to this historical incident since it represents an elegant preparation of a commonly served food item.

The Menorah is lit in the synagogue between Mincha and Maariv. Some have the custom to light the Menorah for Shacharis as well. This custom does not exempt anyone from kindling the Menorah in his own home.

The Dreidel seems to have had its origin as a soldier's gambling device used as a cover-up for Yeshiva students assembling in groups to study Torah - a then prohibited activity.