

Overview

Siman 671 Seif 7:

It is a mitzvah to place the Chanukah lights on the left side of the doorway but if there is no *mezuzah* they should be placed on the right side. If they are placed within the airspace of the doorway it should be placed on the left side of the doorway. Nowadays, that the lighting is inside it is unnecessary to place them near the doorway, nevertheless the custom is to place them by the doorway unless there are many members of the household where it is preferable for each person to place the lights in a different location. **In shul the lights are placed by the southern wall arranged east to west. The lights are kindled with a beracha to publicize the miracle.** One does not discharge his obligation by lighting in shul. The lighting is done between *mincha* and *maariv* and some have the custom on Erev Shabbos to light before *mincha*. If there is a rush to begin davening someone else can finish kindling the lights after the *shaliach tzibbur* kindles the first light.

- ❖ There is a disagreement whether the Chanukah lights placed in airspace of the doorway can be anywhere on the left side or it is preferable to place them as far to the left as possible. (M.B. 36)
- ❖ It is preferable to place the Chanukah lights by a window that faces the public domain rather than near the doorway according to the practice of those who light inside. (M.B. 38)
- ❖ The one kindling the Chanukah lights in shul should stand with his back to the south and begin to light on his right, which is the light that is closest to the *Aron Kodesh*. (M.B. 43)
- ❖ An *avei* should not kindle the lights the first night in shul since the recitation of שהחיינו would be an inappropriate demonstration of joy to the *tzibbur*. At home, however, an *avei* is obligated to recite שהחיינו (M.B. 44).

Stories to Share

Elevating the House

ש"ע ס' תרע"א, ז': "כדי שתהא מזוזה מימין ומנורה משמאל..."

The Mishnah Berurah explains that it is a mitzvah to light the menorah on the opposite side of the mezuzah so that the person lighting is surrounded by mitzvos. But why do we find this detail only regarding Chanukah? Why shouldn't we do all mitzvos opposite the mezuzah so as to be surrounded by mitzvos?

The Otzar Yad Hachayim answered that the Midrash Chanukah recounts that the Greeks decreed that Jews were forbidden to fulfill the mitzvah of mezuzah. Is it any wonder that we light the menorah opposite the mezuzah?

The Shem M'Shmuel, zt"l, offered a different answer. "The Rav explains that we place a mezuzah on our doorpost to per-

Halacha Highlight

Making a Beracha when lighting the menorah in shul

Shulchan Aruch siman 671 : 7

ומדליקין ומברכין (בבית הכנסת) משום פרסומי ניסא

We light and make the berachos (in shul) in order to publicize the miracle

Shulchan Aruch rules that we make all of the berachos when kindling the Chanukah lights in shul. The source of this ruling is a teshuvah of Rivash (שו"ת ריב"ש סי' קי"א) who explains that we recite the beracha on the custom of kindling Chanukah lights in shul similar to the practice of reciting the beracha before reading Hallel on Rosh Chodesh even though it is only a custom. Teshuvah Chacham Tzvi (סי' פ"ח) notes that there is an inconsistency in Shulchan Aruch's position. Regarding the question of reciting a beracha on Hallel on Rosh Chodesh, Shulchan Aruch (as opposed to the Rema) noted that the custom is that the beracha is not recited because the practice of reciting Hallel on Rosh Chodesh is only a custom and we do not recite a beracha on practices that are only customary. However, regarding the practice of reciting the beracha on kindling Chanukah lights in shul, Shulchan Aruch rules that a beracha should be recited despite the fact that it is only a custom.

Aruch HaShulchan (סעי' כ"ו) answers that most often there are people in shul who do not have a home in which to kindle the Chanukah lights and they fulfill their obligation with the Chanukah lights that are lit in shul. For their sake it is appropriate to recite the berachos in shul. Even in those circumstances that no one is fulfilling his obligation with the lighting that is done in shul there is a reason to recite the beracha on this lighting. In the time of the Gemara the miracle was publicized by lighting the Chanukah lights outside by the entrance to one's home or courtyard. Nowadays, we kindle the Chanukah lights inside so we do not publicize the miracle as originally designed by Chazal. The only actual public lighting that we do is the kindling of the Chanukah lights in shul and thus we recite the beracha on that lighting.

petually remind us of the oneness of Hashem and our love of Hashem with all our hearts, souls, and means; at all times, in everything we do. Through this, the house and everything in it are elevated to Hashem. The Midrash explains that the owner of the house stands inside the house and affixes a mezuzah to it, and Hashem stands outside and draws him close.

"We light the menorah on Chanukah in order to shine the light of Hashem into the outside world. Through this we lift up all we come in contact with to Hashem. Through the Chanukah lights, we elevate ourselves in our dealings with mundane matters and sanctify His Name, elevating ourselves and the entire world."