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Halakha

Hanukkah: Reciting Blessings after Lighting

When lighting the Hanukkah candles we first say, of course, the Berakhoth (blessings) and then we light the candles. However, if somebody started lighting the candles without saying the Berakha, then suddenly remembered in the middle that he hadn't said the Berakha (blessing), provided that there are still candles left to be lit, he can say the Berakha of *LeHadliq Ner Hanukkah* and continue lighting the remainder.

This is true even though it is only the first candle that is the obligation for that day and the others are only for *Hiddur Mišwah* (to glorify the precept). If, however, he remembered after he finished lighting the last candle, even if he remembered immediately, he cannot recite the Berakha of *LeHadliq Ner Hanukkah* anymore because there is a difference of opinion as to whether he may or may not recite it - and we apply the concept of *Sefeq Berakhoth LeHaqel* (when there is a doubt, do not recite it).

The blessing of *She'asah Nisseem*, however, as well as the blessing of *Shehecheyanu*, (which we recite on the first night), may be recited even when he forgot about the blessing till after he finished lighting all the candles.

(See Ben Ish Hai, Shana Aleph, Parashath Wayyesheb, Oth Yod)



מדרש בן איש חי
Midrash BEN ISH HAI

5779 פרשת וישב

Parasha

Wayyesheb: to the Power of Three

When the Sar Hammashkim (the butler) came to Yoseph Haššaddiq (Joseph) a"h and recounted his dream, he stated that he saw a grape vine in front of him, and added, that on the grape vine were three tendrils:

וּבְגֶפֶן שְׁלוֹשָׁה שָׂרִיגִים *Ubbagefen Shelosha Sarigim*.

The Jewish people are compared to the grape vine for several reasons, one of them being that the body, the trunk of a grape vine is weak, yet its fruit, the grapes, are very praiseworthy, in fact they make wine. So too, we the Jewish people are weaker than all the other nations, yet our fruit, the Torah, the Mišwoth and the Ma'asim Tobeem (good deeds), are most precious.

When a person wants to repent (make Teshubah), three things are required. First of all, the person must have the desire to make Teshubah, though that does not actually do the deed. Then a person has to make Teshubah, but even that is on two levels. The lower level is out of fear (*Yir-ah*) and the higher level is from *Ahaba* (love) and in this we are like the vine with three tendrils. There is another opinion, that the three levels of Teshuba (repentance) are *Maḥashaba* (thought), *Dibbur* (speech) and *Ma'aseh* (the action).

On Hanukkah when we light the candles, the flame has three different colors. The Menorah that we light also consists of three items. The vessel itself, the oil and the wick. This comes to hint that the Nes (miracle) of Hanukkah came after they made Teshubah on all three levels.

(See 'Od Yoseph Hai, Parashath Wayyesheb and Ben Ish Hai, Shana Aleph, Parashath Wayyesheb)

For the Refuah Shelemah of
Yeshayahu Ben Regina

If Someone Lit Shabbath Lights Before Hanukkah Lights in Error

On Friday evening the Hanukkah candles are lit before the Shabbath candles. The question is, if someone were to light the Shabbath candles first in error, can the Hanukkah (Menorah) still be kindled?

If a man lit the Shabbath lights, since (provided) he did not specifically have the intention to accept Shabbath with the lighting of the Shabbath candles, he can still light the Hanukkah after the Shabbath candles. But this only applies to a man.

If it was a woman who was lighting the Hanukkah lights in her home, and she lit the Shabbath candles first in error, she may not light the Hanukkah. This is because women ordinarily accept Shabbath upon themselves with the lighting of the Shabbath candles and, as such, she is now forbidden to light the Hanukkah lights. Therefore, she should have someone else, who has not yet accepted Shabbath, light the Hanukkah and the person doing the lighting should recite the Berakha (blessing) of *Lehadliq Ner Hanukkah*. However she can still say the blessing of *She'asah Nissim* (and *Shehecheyenu* if it is the first day).

(See Shulhan 'Arukh, 679: 1. Kaf Haḥayyim ibid, Oth 3 and 4)

Lighting the Hanukkah Menorah Early

The ideal time to light the Hanukkah candles during the week is when the stars come out (Ṣeth Haḳokhabim). If one is very busy and will be unable to light at the correct time, there is an opinion that one can light before sunset, from Pelagh Haḡminḥa. There must, however, be sufficient oil to burn at least half an hour after the emergence of three stars.

There is a difference of opinion as to whether or not one may light at that time with a Berakha (blessing) or not. The Mishnah Berurah says that one may light with a Berakha, whereas the Kaf Haḥayyim is of the opinion that one should not say the Berakha. Since there is a doubt about the blessing, Sephardim should light without a Berakha.

If one were to light the Hanukkah before Pelagh Haḡminḥa, however, one must extinguish the lights and relight them again after Pelagh Haḡminḥa.

(See Shulhan 'Arukh 672:1. Kaf Haḥayyim ibid, Oth 7-11, 14. Mishnah Berurah ibid, 3)

Women's Corner - by Rabbanith Ruth Menashe 'a"ḥ

By the Women in the Tent Will She Be Blessed

The miracle of Yehudith who overcame the Greek ruler, is remembered during Hanukkah, even though it pre-dates it, because it was against the same enemy. The story of Yehudith, in turn, reminds us of the story of Ya'el.

The unusual bravery of the heroine Ya'el, who killed Sisera, the general of the Canaanite army, is a fascinating story even for women of our generation. Israel, at the time, was oppressed by the king of Canaan, Yabin (Jabin), and cried out for salvation. Ya'el, with wisdom and courage, was G-d's messenger to deliver the Jewish people.

Deborah the prophetess, who composed the famous Shirath Deborah, recounts the outstanding deed of Ya'el and uses the following phrase: *Blessed by women is Yael ... by the women in the tent will she be blessed* (Judges 5:24). It is interesting to note that the phrase *MiNashim BaOhel Teborakh* (by the women in the tent will she be blessed) became an idiomatic phrase that is often used when referring to women. The image of a lady killing an army general, a masculine role quite unheard of for women, is in contradiction to the acceptable image of Jewish women praised for their modesty, remaining within their 'tent'. How then can we explain the fact that we use the above phrase to refer to any Jewish woman, considering her unconventional behavior?

(To be continued)