

10 Mar-Cheshvan 5773  
Oct. 26, 2012



Shabbos Daf 23

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**Tzvi Gershon Ben Yoel (Harvey Felsen) o”h**

May the studying of the Daf Notes be a zechus for his neshamah and may his soul find peace in Gan Eden and be bound up in the Bond of life

[*The Gemora continues to prove that it is the kindling of the Chanukah lights that is considered the performance of the mitzvah (and not the placing).*] And furthermore, since we pronounce a blessing: [*Blessed are You, Hashem*] Who has sanctified us by His commandments and commanded us to kindle the light of Chanukah, it proves that the kindling is considered the performance of the *mitzvah*. This indeed proves it.

The *Gemora* notes: And now that we say that the kindling is considered the performance of the *mitzvah*, if a deaf-mute, deranged person, or a minor kindles it, he has accomplished nothing. But a woman may certainly kindle it, for Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi ruled: It is obligatory for women to kindle the Chanukah lights, because they were also involved in the same miracle. [*Rashi cites two explanations: the Greeks decreed that the Jewish women be despoiled on their wedding nights by the Greek Hegemon (Jus Prima Noctus), and because a woman (Yehudis, the daughter of Yochanan, the Kohen Gadol) played a crucial role in the Chanukah story (by killing the Greek general after getting him drunk).*]

Rav Sheishes said: The *mitzvah* of kindling the Chanukah lights is incumbent upon a guest (*as well*).

Rabbi Zeira said: Originally, when I was (*a student*) at the academy, I participated in the cost with my host by giving him a few *perutos*; but after I married my wife (*and he continued at times to study away from home*), I said, “Now I certainly do not need it (*to give any coins to my host*), because they (*my wife*) kindle the lights on my behalf at my home” (*for since a woman is obligated, she can discharge the husband’s obligation*).

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: All oils are fit for the Chanukah lights, but olive oil is of the best. Abaye observed: At first the

master (*Rabbah*) used to seek sesame seed oil, saying, “The light of this is more lasting” (*for olive oil is consumed much faster*), but when he heard this teaching of Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi, he would search for olive oil, saying, “This yields a clearer light.”

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi also said: All oils are fit for ink, and olive oil is of the best.

[*The ink was made by burning oil in a glass container until the sides became blackened. The black substance was then scraped off, and a small amount of oil was added, and the resultant mixture was kneaded. It was then dried and crushed into the rest of the ink mixture. The first stage, when the oil was burned to create the black substance, was called smoking, and when oil was added to that substance later and kneaded, it was referred to as kneading.*] The scholars inquired: [*Is olive oil best*] for kneading or for smoking?

The *Gemora* answers: Come and bring a proof from a *braisa* taught by Rav Shmuel bar Zutra: All oils are fit for ink, and olive oil is of the best, both for kneading and for smoking.

Rav Shmuel bar Zutra taught as follows: All smoke-generating (*oils*) are fit for ink, and olive oil is the best.

Rav Huna said: All gums are good for ink, but balsam gum is the best of all.

Rav Chiya bar Ashi said: He who kindles the Chanukah lights must recite a blessing; while Rabbi Yirmiyah said: He who sees the Chanukah lights must recite a blessing. [*Rashi notes that only a spectator who has not yet kindled the lights himself, or he is in a boat, is required to recite this blessing.*]

Rav Yehudah said: On the first day (of Chanukah), he who sees (the lights) must recite two, and he who lights must recite three blessings; thereafter, he who lights recites two, and he who sees recites one. [One who lights his own menorah makes the blessing: *asher kidishanu bimitzvosav vitzivanu lihadlik ner shel Chanukah. There is another blessing recited as well, and that is: she'asah nissim – Who has wrought miracles. These two blessings are recited every night. On the first night of Chanukah, one makes a shehechyanu. On the remaining nights, one does not. Even if one does not light his own menorah, but only sees another menorah lit, one should still make the blessing of she'asah nissim.*]

The Gemora asks: What is omitted (on the other days)?

The Gemora answers: 'This season' (shehechyanu) is omitted.

The Gemora asks: Yet, let 'she'asah nissim' be omitted?

The Gemora answers: A miracle occurred every day (by burning longer than it should have).

The Gemora asks: What blessing is recited (when kindling the lights)?

The Gemora answers: [Blessed are You, Hashem] Who has sanctified us by His commandments and commanded us to kindle the light of Chanukah.

The Gemora asks: And where (in the Torah) did He command us (for this mitzvah is not Biblical).

Rav Avia said: It is written: You shall not deviate (from the word which the (the Rabbis) shall tell you). Rav Nechemiah said: It is from that which is written: Ask your father and he will tell you; your elders, and they will say to you.

Rav Amram asked from the following Mishna: Demai (produce purchased from an am ha'aretz; since we are uncertain if ma'aser was separated, one is obligated to separate ma'aser rishon from it) can be employed for an eruv<sup>1</sup> and for a joint

<sup>1</sup> eruvei chatzeiros (If several houses open into a courtyard, one is Rabbincally forbidden to carry from the house into the courtyard and vice versa, unless they make an eruv. Bread, which is owned by all the residents, is placed in one of the houses. They are now regarded as if

ownership (of a movoi – from a courtyard to an alleyway), a blessing (of Hamotzi) is recited over it, and an invite to join a Birchas Hamazon is recited after it, and (ma'aser from) it may be separated by an unclothed person, and at twilight (on Friday). But if you say that every Rabbinical mitzvah requires a blessing, here, when one stands unclothed, how can he recite a blessing; do we not require (that which is derived from the verse): therefore shall your camp be holy, which is lacking here (when he is unclothed)?

Abaye said: A definite Rabbinical mitzvah requires a blessing, whereas a doubtful Rabbinical mitzvah does not.

The Gemora asks: But what of the second day of Festivals, which is a Rabbinical decree based on a doubt (as to which day of the month it is), and yet, it requires a blessing?

The Gemora answers: There it was instituted in order that it should not be treated with disrespect.

Rava said: The majority of the 'am ha'aretzin' (ignorant people) tithe their produce (and it is merely an 'extra' stringency to tithe again; that is why a blessing is not required; however, an ordinary Rabbinical doubt, such as the second day of a Festival, requires a blessing).

Rav Huna said: If a (house in a courtyard) courtyard has two doors (that open into the courtyard), it requires two (Chanukah) lights. Rava said: That was said only (if they are situated) at two (different) sides (of the courtyard); but if (the doors are) on the same side, it is unnecessary.

The Gemora asks: What is the reason (for the requirement to light two lights)? Shall we say that it is on account of suspicion? But whose suspicion? If it is on account of the world (the people that pass by); then let it be necessary even on the same

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they have a common residence and the courtyard is their private domain. They are now allowed to carry from the merged houses into the courtyard and vice versa.)

eruv techumin (one who places a certain amount of food in a place up to 2,000 amos away from his current location; he is then permitted to walk 2,000 amos beyond there because the location of his food is regarded as his residence)

side (for a stranger may think that the courtyard fronts two separate houses)? And if the suspicion is on account of the townspeople, then even if (the doors are) on two different sides, it is still unnecessary?

The Gemora answers: In truth, it is on account of the suspicion of the townspeople, yet perhaps they may pass one door and not the other, and they will say, "Just as it (the light) has not been kindled at this door, so has it not been kindled at the other."

The Gemora asks: And from where do you know that we are concerned for suspicions? Because it was taught in a braisa: Rabbi Shimon said: On account of four considerations the Torah ordered *pe'ah*<sup>2</sup> to be left at the end of the field (instead of enacting that a certain portion of the field be left for the poor while he is still reaping): (1) as a precaution against the robbing of the poor; (2) against wasting the time of the poor; (3) against suspicion; (4) and against (transgressing): you shall not finish off (the corners of your field). He explains: As a precaution against the robbing of the poor - lest the owner see an opportune moment and say to his poor relatives, "This is *pe'ah*." And against wasting the time of the poor - that the poor should not have to sit and wait (for the owner to leave some over) so that they can say, "Now the owner is leaving *pe'ah*." And against suspicion - that passersby may not say, "Cursed be the man who has not left *pe'ah* in his field." And against (transgressing): you shall not finish off (the corners of your field).

The Gemora asks: Aren't all of these on account of the prohibition: you shall not finish off?

Rava answers: It means: as a precaution against cheaters (who will say that they left *pe'ah* before).

Rav Yitzchak bar Redifah said in the name of Rav Huna: A lamp with two spouts is credited to two people.

Rava said: If one fills a dish with oil and surrounds it with wicks, and places a vessel over it, it is credited to many people; if, however, he does not place a vessel over it, he turns it into a large fire, and is not credited even to one.

<sup>2</sup> (a corner of the field is left over for the poor)

Rava said: It is obvious to me (that if one must choose due to a lack of funds between) the light for his house (on Shabbos) and the Chanukah light, the light for his house is preferable, on account (of the importance) of the peace of the home (for otherwise, they will be distressed by having to sit in the darkness). If it is between the light for his house (on Shabbos) and wine for Kiddush (on Shabbos), the light for his house is preferable, on account of the peace of the home.

Rava inquired: What if the choice lies between the Chanukah lights and Kiddush; is Kiddush more important, because it is a frequent obligation, or perhaps the Chanukah lights are preferable, on account of publicizing the miracle?

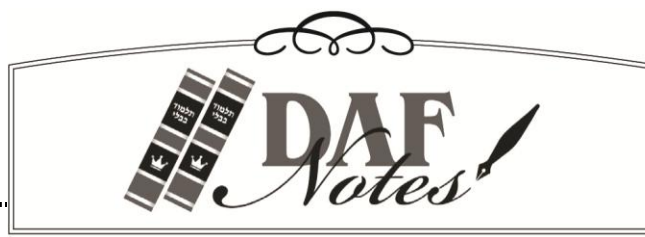
After inquiring, he himself resolved it: The Chanukah lights are preferable, on account of publicizing the miracle.

Rav Huna said: One who is careful about the mitzvos of kindling lights for Shabbos and Chanukah will merit to have children who are Torah scholars. One who is careful about the mitzvah of mezuzah will merit a beautiful home. One who is careful about the mitzvos of tzitzis will merit a beautiful garment. One who is careful about the mitzvah of Kiddush on Shabbos will eventually acquire barrels of wine.

Rav Huna was accustomed frequently to pass the door of Rabbi Avin the carpenter. Seeing that he habitually kindled many lights (on Shabbos and Chanukah), he remarked: Two great men will issue from here. Rav Idi bar Avin and Rav Chiya bar Avin issued from there.

Rav Chisda was accustomed frequently to pass the house of Rav Shizvi's father. Seeing that he habitually kindled many lights (on Shabbos or Chanukah), he remarked: A great man will issue from here. Rav Shizvi issued from there.

Rav Yosef's wife used to kindle (the Shabbos lights) late (right before dark). Rav Yosef said to her: It was taught: He did not take away the pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night. This teaches us that the pillar of cloud overlapped the pillar of fire, and the pillar of fire overlapped the pillar of cloud. Thereupon she thought of doing it very early. An old man said to her: It was taught: Providing that one is not too early (for it will not be recognizable that it is being done for Shabbos) or too late.



Rava said: One who loves Torah scholars (like his own children) will merit children who are Torah scholars. One who honors Torah scholars will merit that his daughters marry Torah scholars. One who fears Torah scholars will become a sharp Torah scholar himself. If he does not learn regularly, his opinion will at least be respected like a Torah scholar. (23a – 23b)

## INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

### *A Woman's Obligation*

The *Gemora* says that women are required to fulfill the mitzvah of Chanukah lights, because “they, too, were involved in that miracle.”

Rashi cites two explanations of the *Gemora*: the Greeks decreed that the Jewish women be despoiled on their wedding nights by the Greek Hegemon (*Jus Primae Noctus*), and because women played a crucial role in the Chanukah story.

In Meseches Megillah (4a), the same concept is used in the *Gemora* for explaining why women are required to hear the Megillah: for they, too, were involved in the miracle. There, Rashi says only that Haman's decree applied to the women as well, without mentioning that the miracle occurred because of Esther.

Tosafos cite Rashbam's explanation that the miracle occurred through a woman, but conclude that Rashi's interpretation is the more likely.

It is unclear why Rashi here cites the Rashbam's opinion along with his own.

### *Special Rewards*

The *Gemora* says that Rav Huna noticed that Rebbe Avin the woodchopper would light many candles, and Rav Huna concluded that two great men would emerge from him. Indeed, the *Gemora* continues, Rebbe Avin's two sons, Rav Idi and Rav Chiya were both great men. Similarly, Rav Chisda noticed that the father (in law – see Rashi) of Rav Shizvi would light many

candles, and concluded that a great man would emerge from him. Rav Shizvi was indeed a great man.

Many commentators deal with why Rebbe Avin was blessed with two great sons, while Rav Shizvi's father (in law) was only blessed with one. According to Tosafos, the text should be emended slightly. In the first case, it should say that that *they* would light many candles, referring to Rebbe Avin and his wife, while in the second case, the phrase should say “she would light.” Since, in the second case, only Rav Shizvi's mother (in law) took part in the mitzvah, only one great man became a part of their family.

The text of the Rif has the word “they” in both cases. However, in the first case, his text reads that “they were careful with lights,” while in the second case, it says “they were careful with light.” The Ran concludes from this that Rebbe Avin's family would light many light *for both Shabbos and Chanukah*, while Rav Shizvi's father( in law)'s family was careful only with Shabbos lights. This is also the explanation of Maharsha, who points out that it would seem that, merely by passing by their respective homes (which is how the *Gemora* explains that Rav Huna and Rav Chiya took notice of the lights), it is unlikely that Rav Huna and Rav Chiya would be able to know which member of the family was careful with the mitzvah. They merely observed many lights on Shabbos, and, in the case of Rebbe Avin, on Chanukah, and were able to tell all pertinent details from there.

This seems to be the answer favored by Rashi, who writes in s.v. “בשרגא” (in the singular) - “of Shabbos.” Thus, it seems that he reads the second case as referring only to Shabbos lights, which is why the family only merited one great man.