

Congregation and Talmud Torah Ahavath Achim

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Affiliated with the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America

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CHANUKAH NEWSLETTER November 27 First Night



THE EDUCATIONAL ASPECT OF PIRSUMEI NISA

We understand *pirsumei nisa*, publicizing the miracle as being a function of numbers. The more people know about it the greater the publicity. On some level this is correct. Certainly when it comes to advertising a product the more people view the ad, the better you have done as an advertiser. Of course you really are successful the more people you entice to buy your product.

Rabbi Uri Pilichowski in his work "The Moadim" makes a similar point regarding *pirsumei nisa*. If it is merely a question of "getting the word out" then why did our sages not demand that we light candles in the public square as indeed one "branch" of Judaism heartily endorses. Instead our sages required lighting ideally in the doorway as fulfilling *pirsumei nisa*. Rabbi Pilichowski correctly notes that the Syrian Greeks persecuted Jews in many ways. One decree was they could not lock their doors. This of course precluded privacy. So our sages wanted us to light in the doorway not only to publicize the miracle but also educate the observer as to what the miracle was about.

It is not enough to publicize; to draw attention. Once you do that you must educate.

Let me wish one and all a *freilicher Chanukah*.

Rabbi Ari Kagan

THE PROCEDURE FOR LIGHTING CHANUKAH CANDLES

1. The menorah should be lit as soon as the first stars come out or as soon as possible thereafter.
2. The menorah is placed in a window facing the street, within thirty feet of the street (three floors above ground level) or in a prominent place in the home.
3. The lights must be capable of burning at least one half hour on weekday nights. On Friday night, eruv shabbos, the Chanukah menorah must contain enough or be large enough to burn eighty minutes or more.
4. On Saturday night, at home, havdalah is recited first; then the Chanukah lights are lit. (In the synagogue the order is reversed).
5. The order of placement has the first light at the right end of the menorah, as you face it; the additional lights are added subsequently from left to right. The order of ignition is from left to right. The newest addition is lit first.
6. The three blessings for the first night and two on each subsequent are found in the siddur, together with Hanerot Hallalu. The blessings are said after the lighting. Any appropriate songs then follow.
7. It is a custom to avoid work during the first half hour of burning of the menorah (for women).
8. The shamus, the additional light is lit to prevent accidentally using the sanctified lights for secular activity, should be clearly distinguishable from the lights representing the days of Chanukah. A light that goes out before the requisite time period need not be relit as long as the fuel present was sufficient, never on a shabbos

THE HEBREW FREE BURIAL SOCIETY

Anyone who has had to take care of a funeral and burial expenses knows how steep an expense that can be these days. There are many elderly Jews that living alone without close relatives. There are many poor Jews, including some from the former Soviet Union. When such people pass from this world their burial is a responsibility that falls on each and everyone of us. Fortunately, the Hebrew Free Burial Society (HFBA) is there to take the burden of the this mitzvah from our shoulders. The HFBA serves the entire New York area, carrying out its responsibilities with dignity, according to all halachic requirements. If you have not yet sent your contribution to the HFBA, please do so or give your check to the Rabbi.

From Our Sisterhood

Even though the Maccabees helped defeat the Greeks, who were the enemies of the Jewish people, it was all done through the Hand of HaShem. A treasured sentence for us to say is "**Ayn Ode Milvado**" - "There is none other than HaShem".

It is appropriate to say that sentence in good times and in bad times.

Happy Chanukah to all!

WITHIN THE SYNAGOGUE FAMILY

MAZAL TOV

To Mr. & Mrs. Bernard Zysberg on the birth of a granddaughter

REFUAH SHLAIMA

Dr. Stanley Blicch, son of Mrs. Yolanda Blicch

Mrs. Lia Honikman, mother of Mr. Zechariah Honikman

Mr. Alan Poretsky, brother of Mr. Michael Poretsky

Mr. Noach Steinberg, brother-in-law of Mr. Chaim Farkas

Wishing all our friends and families a bright Chanukah and a healthy winter..