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*Lyon*

GUIDE FOR THE TRAVELER ON CHANUKAH  
BY MEMBERS OF THE WEXNER AND BEREN KOLLEL ELYON  
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## TRAVELING ALONE ON CHANUKA

RABBI DAVID HELLMAN

The Chayei Adam (154:20) writes that a person should gather the members of his household together in order to light Chanuka candles as a family, thereby increasing *pirsumei nisa* (publicizing the miracle of Chanuka). This article will address some of the issues that arise when this ideal is impossible and a family cannot light together, specifically when one is traveling alone and the rest of his family remains at home.

Even one traveling away from home is obligated in the *mitzva* of Chanuka candles. However, the Talmud (*Shabbat* 23a) relates that after Rabbi Zeira got married, he no longer lit Chanuka candles when he was away from home. Rabbi Zeira explained, "I no longer have to light because they light for me in my home." Some authorities maintain that when a person is away from home, because his wife's lighting fulfills his obligation, he may not light his own candles with a *bracha*, even if he so desires. However, the Rema (O.C. 677:3) rules that if a person wishes, he may have in mind to not fulfill his obligation through his wife's lighting and light his own candles with a *bracha* at the location where he is staying. The Mishna Berura (*ibid.*) rules that while a person may rely upon the Rema's position, because it is a matter of dispute, it is preferable to hear the *brachot* from another person to avoid a potential *bracha l'vatala*.

If a person will be returning from a trip (or from work, etc.) during Chanuka, he should do his best to return to light candles at nightfall. If he will only be able to reach his home later, he may still light with a *bracha*, as long as someone else is still awake in the house. If everyone is asleep, the Magen Avraham (672:6) rules that a person should still light candles, but it is too late to say a *bracha*. He therefore says that if it is possible, he should wake someone in order to fulfill the *mitzva* properly. While the Mishna Berura (672: 11) quotes this Magen Avraham, seemingly in agreement, in his Sha'ar HaTziun he quotes the Chemed Moshe who argues that a person may indeed light with a *bracha* until dawn, even if no one else is awake. The Sha'ar HaTziun concludes that one may rely upon the Chemed Moshe if he wishes to do so.

Rav Moshe Feinstein (O.C. 4:105:7) forcefully argues in favor of the Chemed Moshe, explaining that *pirsumei nisa* is an added element of the *mitzva*, but the basic obligation of lighting candles applies even in cases when it doesn't publicize the miracle to others. He therefore rules that even if no one else is awake, a person is obligated to light the candles with a *bracha*. However, even Rav Feinstein agrees that if possible, it is preferable to make sure someone will be awake at that time.<sup>1</sup>

Rav Hershel Schachter and Rav Mordechai Willig both maintain that if a person knows in advance that he will be returning very late when everyone will be asleep, his wife should light on his behalf at the proper time. Even though it is generally preferable to fulfill a *mitzva* by one's own actions

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<sup>1</sup> Rav Ovadiah Yosef (Chazon Ovadiah, Chanuka pg. 65) quotes many *poskim* who agree with Rav Feinstein. However, Rav Nissin Karelitz (Chut Shani, Ribbis pg. 343) rules in accordance with the Magen Avraham.

and not through an agent, in this case it is preferable to fulfill the *mitzva* through his wife's lighting in order to fulfill it in the most proper manner.<sup>2</sup>

Finally, if a person did not know that his family would be lighting on his behalf and returns home to find that his family did, in fact, light for him without his instruction, there is a dispute as to whether or not he has fulfilled his obligation. The Chayei Adam (154:34) writes that one should, therefore, light his own Chanuka candles, but without a making a *bracha*.

## AIR TRAVEL ON CHANUKA

RABBI ETAN SCHNALL

The question of air travel during Chanuka poses an interesting *halachic* dilemma. Normally, one lights Chanuka candles in his home. If he resides elsewhere temporarily during the holiday, *halacha* may dictate that he share in his host's lighting, and sometimes he will light his own candles. However, one traveling by airplane may spend an entire night in the air, never reaching his home or any residence whatsoever. What is the obligation of an air traveler to light Chanuka candles in such a situation?

Chazal (*Shabbat* 21b) define the *mitzva* of lighting Chanuka candles as "*ner ish u'vaito*" – "a candle for each man and his house." This may be understood in two ways. If the focus is placed on the "*ish*," then the *mitzva* is incumbent upon the individual, regardless of his location. On the other hand, if Chazal intend to emphasize "*vaito*," the obligation devolves upon the house itself, and the individual residing there discharges this obligation by lighting a *menora* in his home.

Tosafot (*Sukka* 46a) assert that the obligation is comparable to that of the *mitzva* of *mezuzah* in the sense that the obligation is upon the house. Therefore, one who has no house does not light. Rashi (*Shabbat* 23a)<sup>3</sup> cites an opinion that apparently concurs. He addresses one who is on a boat during Chanuka and does not light candles but makes the *birkat haroeh* instead when seeing the candles at the home of another Jew.<sup>4</sup> Rav Soloveitchik understood that Rambam's position follows that of Rashi and Tosafot.<sup>5</sup>

However, other *Rishonim* disagree. In the opinion of Rav Aharon HaKohen,<sup>6</sup> even one who is on a boat must light candles. Levush (O.C. 677:2) reflects this view and adds that one who sleeps in the forest or other unenclosed locations is similarly required to light there, albeit not in a house. Apparently, these opinions indicate that the *mitzva* is a personal obligation, even when no house is available.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, Aruch HaShulchan (O.C. 677:5) records that the accepted custom is to attempt to satisfy this position and light at least one candle even while in transit, including one who is traveling through the night by coach.

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<sup>2</sup> Rav Nissin Karelitz (*ibid.*, pg. 342) rules similarly. However, Rav Shmuel Vosner (*Shut Shevet Halevi*, 4:66) seems to disagree and prefers that the person light on his own later.

<sup>3</sup> See *Sukkat Chaim* (Hilchot Chanuka, pg. 116).

<sup>4</sup> See Talmud (*Shabbat* 23a).

<sup>5</sup> See *Hararei Kedem* (vol. 1, pg. 318); see also *P'nei Yehoshua* (*Shabbat* 21a, s.v. *tanu rabanan*).

<sup>6</sup> *Orchot Chaim*, Hilchot Chanuka (no. 18)

<sup>7</sup> For a discussion regarding the possible obligation to buy or rent a place of dwelling in order to fulfill the *mitzva*, see Kovetz P'nei Chanuka (pg. 12).

Some contemporary *poskim* adopt the view that one must light even when sleeping outside (or in an open-air boat, etc.), as long as the area is enclosed, and certainly when it is covered, such as in a tent or the like.<sup>8</sup> Others question this position.<sup>9</sup> However, even the lenient authorities suggest a more stringent approach regarding one who is in a vehicle overnight, for this may constitute a temporary dwelling place, as suggested by Maharsham, Rav Shalom Mordechai Shvadron.<sup>10</sup> Maharsham rules that one who pays train fare is given space to eat, drink and sleep overnight on the train. Essentially, he has rented a dwelling place and should therefore light on the train.

Likewise, purchasing a ticket for overnight air travel may be tantamount to renting a temporary dwelling, where all opinions would agree that one is obligated to light Chanuka candles.<sup>11</sup> Obviously, lighting a candle on a commercial flight is dangerous and illegal.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach would instruct individuals in such situations to light battery-operated incandescent flashlights without making a *bracha*, relying on the opinions that accept electric bulbs for use as Chanuka candles.<sup>13</sup> In addition, the traveler would be instructed to appoint an agent to light on his behalf at the traveler's home.<sup>14</sup>

However, some authorities question the comparison of air travel to the discussion of railway travel. Today's flights of several hours contrast starkly with the long-distance train travel of earlier generations that could span several days or more. Therefore, a plane ticket may not constitute the rental of a temporary dwelling place. As a result, based on the above discussion, overnight travel may actually circumvent one's obligation in the *mitzva* of lighting Chanuka candles altogether, or make proper fulfillment of the *mitzva* impossible. Therefore, *poskim* recommend avoiding such situations when not absolutely necessary.<sup>15</sup>

## STUDENTS IN DORMITORIES ON CHANUKA

RABBI RAFI ROSENBLUM

In the past fifty years, the number of students learning in Yeshivot around the world has increased tremendously. This growth has given rise to a number of *halachic* questions in many disparate areas. One area of uncertainty exists with regard to the correct location for dormitory students to light Chanuka candles. In the following paragraphs we will outline the issues and present the various opinions amongst *poskim*.

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<sup>8</sup> See Shut Tzitz Eliezer 15:29.

<sup>9</sup> See Shut Minchat Shlomo (2: 51:1); Shut Igrot Moshe (Y.D. 3:14:5; see also O.C. 5:43).

<sup>10</sup> See Shut Maharsham (4:146). See also Ratz KaTzvi (Chanuka / Purim, no. 9).

<sup>11</sup> See Kovetz Mivakshei Torah, Kislev 5756 (4:33). See also Shut V'Dibarta Bam (no. 180) for more on this discussion, including Rav Moshe Feinstein's rulings regarding one who must spend a night in an airport terminal.

<sup>12</sup> See also Kovetz Darkei Hora'ah (4: 94) for additional *halachic* implications that may result.

<sup>13</sup> For further discussion of the use of electric Chanuka candles, see Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach's M'orei HaAish (5:2), Sukkat Chaim (Hilchot Chanuka, pg. 75), Mitzvat Ner Ish U'Vaito (7:12).

<sup>14</sup> Halichot Shlomo (pg. 260). The flashlight used must have at least one half-hour's worth of battery power and must be positioned in a manner that clearly indicates its purpose of *pirsumei nisa* (publicizing the miracle). See Halichot Shlomo (ibid.) for a further discussion regarding soldiers stationed in tanks on Chanuka.

<sup>15</sup> See Shut V'Dibarta Bam, 180; Mitzvat Ner Ish U'Vaito (8:16).

The first question that must be addressed is whether students in dormitories should light altogether, or should they rely on their parents to light for them at home. The Talmud (Shabbat 23a) records the following:

Rav Sheshet ruled that a guest is obligated to light Chanuka candles. Rabbi Zeira said, “When I was a student in Yeshiva, I would give my host a *peruta* [small coin], but after marrying I decided that I need not continue to do so because they are lighting for me in my house.”

From this passage it appears that only after Rabbi Zeira was married did he rely on his wife to light for him, but as long as he was single, he discharged his obligation at his host’s home. This is the generally accepted opinion of Ashkenazi authorities.<sup>16</sup> However, Rav Ovadya Yosef notes that the Shulchan Aruch (O.C. 677) rules that one who is traveling and has someone lighting for him at home does not need to light.<sup>17</sup> He understands the Shulchan Aruch as applying to all cases, not just when a wife can light at home for her husband.<sup>18</sup> For this reason there are many Sephardic students who do not light Chanuka candles when studying away from their homes.

Having established that Ashkenazi custom is for students to light their own Chanuka candles, the next question is to determine the proper place for them to light. There are two possibilities: the dining room or the dormitory. The Shulchan Aruch (677: 1) rules that if one has two distinct locations, one in which he eats and one in which he sleeps, he should light in the place where he sleeps. The Rema (ibid.) disagrees, arguing that he should light in the place that he eats.

In accordance with the Rema, Ashkenazi practice should be to light in the dining room. Indeed, this was the opinion of Chazon Ish and Rav Aharon Kotler.<sup>19</sup> However, Rav Moshe Feinstein<sup>20</sup> qualifies the Rema’s ruling, stating that it applies only if everything else is equal. However, in a Yeshiva or similar institution, the dining room is shared by hundreds of students, whereas a room in the dormitory houses only a few students. Therefore, because a student’s dormitory room is certainly more uniquely his own than the dining room, this is the proper place to light, even according to the Rema.<sup>21</sup> This is also the opinion of Rav Hershel Schachter.

The final question is when a Yeshiva student should light Chanuka candles. The Mishna Berura (672:10) writes that learning is forbidden once the time to light Chanuka candles arrives. Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach<sup>22</sup> explains that there is no difference in this regard between someone learning in Yeshiva and someone who is not. However, Rav Hershel Schachter<sup>23</sup> writes that Rav Soloveitchik instructed students learning in Yeshiva not to leave their normal afternoon study sessions early in order

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<sup>16</sup> See Mishna Berura (677:1), Shut Maharil (no. 145), Sefer Yemai Hallel V’Hoda’ah (chap. 36, footnote 4, citing Chazon Ish), Kovetz P’ninei Chanuka (pg. 82, citing Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv).

<sup>17</sup> Shut Yechaveh Da’at (O.C. 6:43)

<sup>18</sup> This position must explain that for some reason, Rabbi Zeira’s parents could not light at home on his behalf before he was married.

<sup>19</sup> Cited in Shut T’shuvot V’Hanhagot (2:342:11).

<sup>20</sup> Igrot Moshe (O.C. 4:70:3)

<sup>21</sup> Provided that there are no rules against lighting candles in the dormitory for safety reasons, etc.

<sup>22</sup> Halichot Shlomo (16:1)

<sup>23</sup> MiP’ninei Harav (pg. 188)

to light. This position is based on the ruling of Meiri (Shabbat 21a) that when lighting inside the house one may light at any point during the night, and so Yeshiva students should not interrupt their Torah learning to light Chanuka candles. Rather, they should return home to light at the completion of their normal study session. This position is also recorded in the name of Rav Moshe Feinstein.<sup>24</sup>

## THE TRAVELER ON SHABBAT CHANUKA

RABBI YEHUDA TURETSKY

Chanuka is a holiday that is centered on the home. The home is where we light candles, and it is also where many celebrate the festival. Many, though, leave their homes on Chanuka for various reasons. This article is a brief attempt to address the questions that pertain to one who is away from home on Shabbat Chanuka. Should one light candles at his host's home Friday night, or is some alternative method preferable? Additionally, should a guest returning home after Shabbat light at the host's home or at his primary residence later that evening? As will become clear, a range of opinions exist amongst contemporary *poskim*.<sup>25</sup>

### Lighting Candles in Someone Else's Home

The Shulchan Aruch (O.C. 677:1) rules that a guest should give a *peruta* (small coin<sup>26</sup>) to one's host in order to gain partnership in the lighting of the host's Menorah.<sup>27</sup> The implication is that a guest need not light his own candles. Rather, fulfilling the obligation through the host's lighting of the candles suffices. The Mishna Berura (ibid.), however, writes that it is better to light candles than to give money to the host. Following this opinion, many light candles in the home they are visiting, even if they will only be staying there for a single night.

Other *poskim* disagree with the Mishna Berura and maintain that a guest should not light Chanuka candles but must fulfill the obligation through the host's lighting. This is the opinion of the Galyah Masechet, the position endorsed by Rav Soloveitchik.<sup>28</sup> The basis for this opinion is the suggestion that the *mitzva* to light Chanuka candles can only be fulfilled in one's own home, for the *mitzva* is formulated as "*Ner Ish U'Vaito*" – "a candle for each man and his

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<sup>24</sup> Moadei Yeshurun (chap. 1, footnote 109). It is possible that even Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach would agree to this position for students outside of Israel where the practice is to light inside the house, based on Meiri. His ruling was stated in Israel, where the general custom is to light outside the house.

<sup>25</sup> This article addresses a situation where one travels without leaving a family member at home. If, however, there is someone else at home that can light on the traveler's behalf, the *halacha* may be different. See the article by Rabbi David Hellman, *Traveling Alone on Chanuka*, found in this publication.

<sup>26</sup> See Rav Chaim Jachter's *Gray Matter 3* (pg. 114) regarding the precise value of a *peruta*. It appears that a nickel would certainly suffice according to contemporary authorities.

<sup>27</sup> The precise mechanics of this acquisition is debated amongst contemporary authorities. See, for example, Shut T'shuvot V'Hanhagot (2:157:10) and Shut Shevet HaLevi (1:51:2). It is also possible that some additional oil should be added to the host's oil (see Sukkat Chaim, Hilchot Chanuka, pg. 269).

<sup>28</sup> Cited by Rav Hershel Schachter, B'Ikvei HaTzon (pg. 102).

home” (*Shabbat* 21b). By contributing a *peruta* to the expenses of one’s host, the guest essentially becomes a member of the household from a *halachic* perspective.<sup>29</sup> In contrast, simply lighting candles in a place other than one’s own home may not be a fulfillment of the *mitzva* altogether.<sup>30</sup>

Those who wish to fulfill the obligation according to both the views of the Mishna Berura and Rav Soloveitchik may do so. Indeed, Rav Mordechai Willig<sup>31</sup> suggests that a guest may give a *peruta* to the host, and then light his own candles, as well. However, instead of reciting an individual *bracha* when lighting, the guest should first listen to the host’s *bracha* and answer *amen* before lighting his own candles.

### Lighting On Motzaei Shabbat

Contemporary authorities debate the status of a person who has stayed in one location for Shabbat but plans to sleep at his own residence later that evening. Rav Yaakov Blau<sup>32</sup> maintains that one should return home quickly and light there. Rav Hershel Schachter agrees that one should light at his primary residence.<sup>33</sup>

Some *Achronim* suggest an alternative approach. Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach<sup>34</sup> allows guests to light before departing; as long as one has not left the host’s home, he is still viewed as a guest and is permitted to light there. However, Rav Auerbach requires one to remain at his host’s home for at least one half-hour. Others, such as Rav Yaakov Kaminetsky,<sup>35</sup> agree with this approach but require the guest to remain for a longer period of time and perhaps eat a meal there, as well. Regardless, it may be problematic for a guest to light candles and immediately depart.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> It is possible that this matter revolves around another debate regarding the underlying rationale for giving one’s host a *peruta*’s worth of money. Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (*Shut Minchat Shlomo* 2:58:1) argues that contributing allows one to become part of the household, a perspective seemingly in line with that of Rav Soloveitchik. In contrast, some note that a student of the *Sefer HaTerumah*, (Kuntres *Hilchot Chanuka*, Kovetz Seridim, no. 18) argues that giving a *peruta* ensures that the host will have the guest in mind when he lights candles. For additional perspectives, see Meiri (*Pesachim* 7b) and *Shut Beit Yitzchak* (Y.D. 1:145).

<sup>30</sup> Some *poskim* significantly limit this debate and maintain that if the guest is given his own room to stay in, it is better to light in that room. Only if the guest is not given his own room, or if for some reason the host does not permit lighting in the guest’s room, would the debate between the Mishna Berura and Rav Soloveitchik apply. For relevant sources, see *Shulchan Aruch* and *Rema* (O.C. 677:1), *Mishna Berura* (*ibid*:7) and *Biur Halacha* (*ibid*).

<sup>31</sup> *Ketonet Yosef* (pg. 226), *Am Mordechai*, *Moed* (pg. 106)

<sup>32</sup> *Chovat HaDar* (pg. 107, footnote 65)

<sup>33</sup> Some *poskim* maintain that it is better to light at the host’s home if there is a concern that one will not arrive at his own home until late in the evening. See *Shut T’shuvot V’Hanhagot* (1:391) and *Piskei T’shuvot* (O.C. 677:4). Those who disagree argue that no such qualification exists. Even if one will arrive home very late, the acceptable time for lighting extends as long as members of the household are awake.

<sup>34</sup> *Halichot Shlomo* (pg. 279)

<sup>35</sup> *Emet L’Yaakov* (*Shulchan Aruch* O.C. 677)

<sup>36</sup> For a more extensive discussion of this subject, see Chazon Ovadiah, *Chanuka* (pg. 155).

