

A Tailor of Cracow Lights Chanuka Candles

Special thanks to Revach L'Neshama for the story

Rav Chaim Ozer Grodzinsky, z"tl once visited Cracow. When he arrived, Rav Chaim Ozer sought a tailor who could sew his suit which had torn on the way. He eventually found one, and requested that he fix his suit.

The tailor answered, "Forgive me, Rav, but I have not yet lit the Chanukah candles. If you wish, you can wait until I light, and after a half an hour, I'll sew your suit."

While Rav Chaim Ozer waited, he noticed how this simple tailor prepared himself for the mitzvah. He removed his weekday clothing, and donned Shabbos clothing. He washed his hands and joyously prepared to light the candles.

Rav Chaim Ozer was astounded by the *temimus* of this man and he said, "Now I understand how the city Cracow produces such Gedolai Torah and giants in good middos, if this is what the simple tailors are like!" ♦



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Halacha Challenge

A Chanuka Special Walking by the Light

by Shlomo Epshteyn



The 8th night of Chanuka fell on a Tuesday night. Eretz Yisroel was once again blessed with rain. It was the rainiest night so far in the season. In the Berkman's home, this caused some inconveniences. Twenty minutes after the family lit Chanuka candles, the Shamash candle got put out by the rain water that came from a little leak in the ceiling. Then, a few seconds later, the rain water short-circuited the central electricity unit and all of the lights in the city went out. The Berkman home was now illuminated only by lights of the Chanuka candles. Asher tried to calm his family down: "Don't worry everyone! I have a flashlight in my drawer. I'll go get it." His brother, Micha asked: "But how are you going to walk to your room? You can't benefit from the light of Chanuka candles!" "No problem" - answered Asher - "I'll just walk with my eyes closed."

Question: In order to see where he is going, may Asher walk with his eyes opened?

Answer: Yes.



Dedication
Corner

This week's issue is dedicated
by the Pitzele family, in honor of Yosef Shalom's
second birthday

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Explanation

The Gemora¹ quotes the ruling of Rav Yehuda in the name of Rav Assi: "It's forbidden to count money opposite of [i.e. near] a Chanuka candle." The Gemora then explains that even though the light of a Chanuka candle does not have קדושה (sanctity), one should not use it for mundane activities such as counting money, because one must treat mitzvos in an honorable way.

The Ran rules that one should not use the light of Chanuka candles even for honorable activities such as learning Torah or other mitzvos. He explains that since the mitzva of lighting Chanuka candles was established due to the miracle that happened to the Menorah of the Beis Hamikdash, Chazal made the laws of Chanuka candles similar to the laws of Menorah of the Beis Hamikdash. More specifically, just like it is forbidden to derive benefit from the light of the Menorah of the Beis Hamikdash even for a mitzva, so too it's forbidden to derive benefit from the light of the Chanuka candles—even for a mitzva.

When it comes to using the Chanuka candles to derive benefit from their light, not everything is considered as "usage" of the lights. It's difficult to formulate a precise definition of "usage" in this context. Nevertheless, the poskim rule that using the light of Chanuka candles to illuminate a path (i.e. to avoid stumbling on something) is not considered as true usage of the light². As such, in our scenario, it is not required to close the eyes when walking from one room to another. ♦

1. שבת כב: 2. ע"ן בשער הציון סימן תרעג ס"ק יא

Kids Ask, Zeidy Answers



Zeidy - for what purpose did Hashem create the nights?



You are asking good, deep questions, kids.
Hashem made the nights so that He can create us as new beings each morning!

[Sefas Emes on Chanukah, 5658]

Elephants in Warfare



As we know, the Maccabees stood against a Greek army that had elephants as part of the forces. Historically, elephants were considered formidable instruments of war. Ptolemy, who was one of Alexander the Great's generals, used corps of Asian elephants during his reign as the ruler of Egypt. His son and successor Ptolemy II obtained his supply of elephants further south in Nubia. From then on, war elephants were

employed in the Mediterranean and North Africa throughout the classical period. The Greek king Pyrrhus used elephants in his attempted invasion of Rome in 280 BCE. While they frightened the Roman horses, they were not decisive and Pyrrhus ultimately lost the battle. Alexander the Great trained his foot soldiers to injure the enemy's elephants and cause them to panic.

War elephants were equipped with armor to protect their sides, their tusks were inserted into sharp iron 'cups'. War elephants were trained. For example, they were taught to grasp an enemy soldier and toss him to the person riding on the elephant. ♦

Riddles



Riddle

Yossi decided to spend his Chanuka on a desolate island. He packed 36 candles for the trip. On the way there, one candle fell out of the boat and was forever lost in the depth of the ocean. When Yossi arrived to the island, he found it completely empty, and hence, there was nothing there from which he could make another candle. He tried to break one candle and make it into two candles, but the candles were made from very thick, hard material which required a knife to cut them. Unfortunately, Yossi forgot to pack along his knife. Nevertheless, during each night of Chanuka he fulfilled the mitzva of lighting Chanuka candles on a *mehadrin min hamehadrin* level. How is that possible?

Answer to the last issue's riddle

(Riddle: In what non-life-threatening situation is there a positive mitzvah to eat the meat of a *neveilah* (an animal that died without *sh'chita*)? [Special thanks to Yiddle Riddle Archives (Ohr Somayach Institutions) for this riddle.]

ANSWER: A bird brought as an offering in the Beis Hamikdash wasn't slaughtered with a knife. Rather, the bird was killed by מליקה (a Cohen would insert his thumbnail into the back of the bird's neck). If a non-Kohen would eat this bird, he would be transgressing the prohibition of eating *neveilah*. Kohanim, however, were commanded to eat from certain bird offerings. [source: Rambam, Hilchos Ma'aseh Korbanos 10:1,11:9]