



"A SPECIAL CHANUKAH, SURROUNDED BY SHABBAT"

Chanukah Live – 25 Kislev, 5752-1991

There is a special lesson this year, since the first day of Chanukah was on Shabbos, and the last day will also be on Shabbos. In addition to the general lessons of Chanukah, there is also this special lesson and directive: It teaches us how every aspect of life must be completely permeated and saturated with the "Shabbos spirit."

This is in addition to the general theme of Chanukah. As we have often discussed, the general theme of Chanukah is not personal; Chanukah requires "publicizing the miracle." It involves sharing the inspiration with one's own family; indeed, this applies to every day of Chanukah every year. On Chanukah, we must also publicize in every place, even "outside," and even in "the public domain."

Another fundamental lesson of Chanukah is that we should never be satisfied with our present level of Torah study and fulfillment of Mitzvot. Even if one day a person feels—and others confirm—that he has studied Torah and fulfilled Mitzvot to perfection, on the morrow he may not be satisfied by his past accomplishments. Rather, he must continually add.

This increase must be clearly visible. Just as with the Chanukah lights, it is clearly visible to all that every day he has added another candle, and yet another one. And when the previous candles have shone, he cannot be content with that light, or even with merely adding a new candle: No, he must add another candle, and he must give this new light "preferential treatment."

For the proper order is to begin the lighting from the added candle, and only then rekindle the lights which burned on the previous nights. They are lit only after the new candle is already burning.

In addition to all of these general directives, there is an additional special lesson: We are told, this year especially, that everything that we do, and especially all aspects of Torah and Mitzvot —everything in life, should be permeated with the spirit of Shabbos.

When doing a Mitzvah like the Chanukah candles we lit today, when it is not Shabbos, nor the eve or close of Shabbos —it is an ordinary weekday— this, too, must be permeated with the special energy provided by this Chanukah. Every "Mitzvah candle" —which is part of the greater "Torah of Light" part of the entire Torah— must be permeated with the spirit of Shabbos.

What is the spirit of Shabbos? Shabbos precludes the existence of the mundane: Throughout the week, a Jew deals with ordinary activities, pursuits that are, of themselves,



mundane. He must strive to infuse them with “in all your ways you shall know Him,” preceded by “all of your actions should be for the sake of Heaven.” When Chanukah falls as it does this year, however, it teaches us to begin with a Mitzvah that is ‘Shabbos-like’; Shabbos must then permeate all of the days that follow.

This brings an increase in his mundane activities as well, for he has added time: When Chanukah falls out on Shabbos, the lights he kindles on Friday afternoon relate to the upcoming hours —the hours of Shabbos. He adds his weekday, mundane time onto Shabbos.

Thus, the entire addition to Shabbos, “from the mundane to the holy” by lighting the candles early, is brought beyond his own home through the Chanukah candles, which shine outside his door. So the Shabbos holiness is transmitted outside, as well.

There is a further transformation: Since we kindled the Chanukah lights in the synagogue —with a group, early in the afternoon— when he later kindles the Chanukah candles at home, and when his wife and daughters light the Shabbos candles, those moments are already permeated with Shabbos.

Despite the fact that he may still do weekday activities, and he does indeed perform them, it is different from other years, when he did not derive this added energy from Chanukah with the added quality of the Shabbos spirit, and a Shabbos spirit merged with Chanukah.

Chanukah in general—and certainly the days of Chanukah— relates to the Temple Menorah. Through lighting the Chanukah candles, we hasten the building and consecration of the third Temple, and the kindling of the lights of the golden Menorah in the third Beit HaMikdash.

This increases the person’s feeling and emphasis of the fact that everything that he does has an effect, as the Rambam rules he “brings salvation and deliverance to himself and to the entire world.”

